

THE
Grounds and Occasions
OF THE
CONTROVERSY
Concerning the
Unity of God, &c.

THE
METHODS by which it has been managed,
AND
The MEANS to compose it.

By a Divine of the Church of England.

L O N D O N;
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THE eminently Learned, Wise, and Good Bishop of Down and Connor, *Jeremy Taylor*, having affirm'd and prov'd from express, clear, and full Attestations of Scripture, from the Reasonableness of the thing, from the Testimonies of Fathers, and later Schoolmen, that all the Articles of the Christian Faith are plainly set down in Scripture, did not yet scruple to acknowledge, "That there were still in Scripture innumerable Places containing in them great Mysteries; but then those Mysteries, he thought, were so involv'd with Clouds and Darknes, so cover'd with Allegories and Garments of Rhetorick, that God may seem to have left them as Trials of our Industry, as Arguments of our Imperfections, Incentives to our Longings after the clearest Revelations of Eternity, and as Occasions and Opportunities of Mutual Charity and Toleration. That the Mystorious Passages of Scripture, are Trials ever like to find Work for our Industry, and convincing Arguments of our Imperfections, is evident from the little satisfaction which the many various attempted Interpretations have given; and I question not but this Reflection may incline devout Minds ardently to long for the brightest Revelations

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tions of Eternity: but how few are they who make the obscure Mysteries of Scripture, Occasions and Opportunities of Mutual Charity and Toler-
eration? In truth it is but reasonable to judge that the All-wise God design'd
them for this good end; but the general Event which has accidentally
follow'd, through the Indisposition of unwise and ill-natur'd Men, is,
that they are made Occasions of warring Bitter hatred, and wreaking ze-
alous Malice one upon another.

Could Religious Controversies be manag'd without intemperate Heat,
breach of Friendship and good Neighbourhood, the advantages issuing
thence might perhaps be more and greater than could be easily esteem'd and
number'd; we should certainly reap Fruits worthy our Industry and Study,
either by improvements of our Knowledge, or sense of our Ignorance: we
should happily teach, or at least civilly use one another: but if we are
mistaken of common Prudence, as well as Christian Charity, we shall
turn all our Disputes about Religion, and [when we are forbid them]
every thing else into the Instruments of barbarous Cruelty, and thereby
create a greater mischief to the Body Politick, whereof we are all Mem-
bers, than a wise Compressor would compel us to suffer, or a fair Enemy
with.

It is our own weak sense of being serviceable, not to demonstrate
what is the certain true sense of a Mysteries Article, [I would sooner
promise to solve all the puzzling Phenomena in Nature, or fix the time for
the Downfall of the Turk, and Conversion of the Jews] but to prevent
the mischievous Consequences of various Interpretations, that I am going
to consider.

- I. What has rais'd the Disputes at present agitated among us.
- II. What has inflam'd them to that dangerous Excess, which in time
may disturb the publick Quiet.
- III. What's the proper way to remedy the Mischief which have hap-
pen'd, and to prevent farther.

It is to me evident that the original of our present Disputes can be re-
fer'd to no one Cause, many Persons, Ecclesiasticks and others, diversly
mov'd, have engag'd in them. There is one sort of Men, who have
been sometimes distinguish'd by the Name of *Unitarians*, and by angry
Adversaries reproachfully call'd *Sacrinians*; but [to deal justly on all sides]
who ought to be number'd with the Orthodox, because they not only
embrace the Doctrines of the Church of England, but also are contented
to use her School-terms, which they once thought, and do still think

not to sit to expect his sound Doctrines! These Persons, as to the first
probable, have engaged in our Religious Controversies.

1. Out of an aversion from taking things upon trust. This Motive
must be allow'd to be reasonable and just, because he that gives up his
Faith to human Authority, is beholden to his good Fortune, whatever
the Opinions which fall to his lot, have any thing of truth or usefulness in
them; and as often as they happen to be ill-grounded and noxious, he de-
serves all the evil Consequences which he suffers by them; for if he had
made use of his Reason before he gave his Assent, there was at least a pro-
bability that he might have known better, and guided himself more
safely. The *Scavenger* is Commended in *Scaliger*, who would not take
things upon trust, as not from the Mouth of an Apostle; which is enough
to justify, without farther arguing, all them who are concerned in Religi-
ous Controversies, mov'd thereto by an aversion from taking things up-
on trust. If I were willing to do service to these Orthodox Unitarians,
[for that must be granted to be their Character, now they have explain'd
themselves, and taken off the trash which the Church had stick'd of
them] if I were willing purposely to do them service, I might here ex-
patriate in liberal Phrases one of that noble Disposition of Mind, which takes
nothing upon trust. We are beholden to it for all the great Improve-
ments of Knowledge, which serve the Necessities and Comforts of Life;
and not only so, but machines we owe to it our very Christian Ortho-
doxy itself: for an easy-simplish Believer will never tussle with his Su-
premacie, be it *Alcoran*, or what it will, which he is required to subscribe;
but the wary *Examiner*, who searches the Scriptures that he may see whe-
ther things are as the Church teaches, no sooner perceives the truth of her
Articles, but he holds immovably stedfast to them, and unfeignedly
venerates his holy Mother. But this is not my business now: There-
fore,

2. Another Motive, which I am perswaded has inclin'd these Ortho-
dox Unitarians to enter into Religious Controversy, is an honest desire to
be serviceable to the Church, and useful to well-dispos'd but knowing
Christians, by instructing and informing them. Whether these Persons
are Ecclesiasticks or Laymen it matters not much; for I suppose it will be
granted, that it is lawful for one Man to inform and instruct his Friend,
Neighbour, or Countryman, either in private Discourse, or publick
Print, tho he be not a Minister of the Gospel, or perhaps not Episcopally
ordain'd.

3. I will not say but that these Unitarians may have been thrust upon
Controversy by a forward zeal to defend the mysterious Doctrines of the

Church, against the Headish Interpretations of some eminent Unitary Trinitists. Zeal in defence of Doctrines which are certainly true, or at least religiously believ'd to be so, and against Errors really pernicious, or generally suspected as such by good Men; if it spend its force only to establish the former, and to refute the latter, abstaining from all Illegal, Injurious and Unchristian Treatment of erroneous Persons, may pass for a virtuous and laudable temper of Mind. Men give an assent, an unfeigned assent to Doctrines, because they believe them to be true; and they endeavour to persuade others of the truth of those Doctrines whereof they are persuaded themselves, because they suppose that the same may be beneficial to others, as well as to themselves: On the contrary, they seriously dispute against those Doctrines, which they imagine to have an evil influence, prejudicing the nobler Interests of Mankind. To me then it appears, that the arguing and disputing Temper is cherish'd and prompted by good Nature; but if Wisdom does not direct, and Charity accompany it, if it grows wild and imperious, and uses them ill, whom it cannot convince, it ceases to be a laudable virtuous Temper, and becomes quite another thing. Now whether these Unitarians have vindicated the mysterious Doctrines of the Church of England, by proper cogent Arguments, and in an obliging Christian manner, without illegal injurious treatment of Dissenters; that's a Question which ought not rashly to be determin'd for or against them. That I may more impartially deal in my Censure, I defer the Consideration of it till my method shall lead me to consider also how proper and how cogent have been the Arguments; how winning and civil their manner of handling them, who have made it their business to oppose these unfortunate, but perhaps not justly suspected Unitarians: for to speak freely, I am afraid that all which either of them must pretend to, is to have committed the fewest Mistakes, and to have trespass'd least against the righteous equitable Laws of Christ, and the generally accepted Rules of good Manners.

I have now noted all that I can probably imagine to have prompted the *Orthodox* Unitarians to enter into the Religious Controversies which are at present under debate. Methinks it is too hard to judge as some do, that they have been spur'd on by a vain Ostentation of Learning; tho' thus much is evident, without a stock not contemptible they could not have done what they have: but to say that their Writers are mercenary, and bi'd to the Work, looks as like an impertinent Slander as can be; but to suppose them hir'd, which I don't believe, tho' I can't prove the contrary, I would fain ask, where's the unpardonable crime, to be hir'd to write in defence of this or that Explication which the Church

giver of an Article that's obscure, and understood but in part? If any Man will hire me to that Work, which agrees with honest Principles, and exceeds not my poor Abilities, I am not ashamed to declare that I am at his Service, ready to be commanded at a reasonable Rate.

There is another Division of Disputants engag'd in Religious Controversy, but which fall into many a Subdivision; all which Subdivisions are in open profession, and most of them in truth and reality of the Church of *England*, as well as the Unitarians, tho' they are sometimes unwisely content to prove their Title to that Honour by so weak an Argument, as their differing from the Unitarians; and when they have done, very few of them differ from the Unitarians, except in terms Scholastick, peculiar Phrase and manner of Expression, which small matter is also now very well accommodated.

This Division of Disputants, with all their Subdivisions, may be compris'd under the general distinction of Nominalists and Realists: the former are of the Church, and know themselves to be so; the latter are meer Heathens, as far as Polytheism goes, tho' they know it not: we are bound in Charity to believe they know it not, because they profess to be of the Church. Both the Nominalists and Realists engag'd against the suspected Unitarians, mov'd thereunto, as may be guess'd from their Writings,

1. By a profound Reverence for Authority. To do these Gentlemen justice as well as the former, this Motive is not to be rashly condemn'd, nor yet can it be well allow'd, without nearly examining what is here meant by Reverence, and what degrees of Reverence are here spoken of: Meaning by Reverence, a good opinion, and high esteem of the Wisdom of the Antients, of Fathers and Councils, of modern Convocations of pious and dignified, learned and wealthy Men, methinks it is a justifiable Motive, a Motive also to which we are naturally inclin'd: for we are born only with a nobler Form, and a Docility above other Creatures; and under the first advances of our Knowledge, it is hardly possible for us to think of ever becoming, like the Royal Psalmist, wiser than our Teachers: When our Reason is grown manly, and can go alone, i. e. of it self compare Ideas, examine their Agreement and Disagreement, thence drawing farther useful Conclusions, still we are justly inclin'd to have a great Respect for our Teachers, and Men of Fame that went before us; and cannot, nay ought not to endure to have their Doctrines condemn'd as erroneous, without fair and full evidence against them. When Experience chances to acquaint us with any notions, about which our Ancestors, or now living Teachers, have been mistaken, there is still a Re-

repay due to them, a Reverence that should restrain us from exposing them, a Reverence that should guide us modestly to represent what our own Study and observation hath discover'd; and 'tis but an honest and grateful Reverence to their Wisdom, to vindicate all their Conclusions, which our own Reason apprehends to have been fairly drawn from just Premises. Wherefore all those Writers that have engag'd in Religious Controversy, mov'd by such Sentiments as these, their Reverence for Authority becomes strong, and justifies their Undertaking; but what is beyond this, is Excess and Extravagance, and it were strange if the products of such Motives should be regular and even, reasonable and useful. It is notorious Excess, and wild Extravagance, to make Gods of Men, and equal Human Authority to Divine. The Doctrines of Fathers, the Canons of Councils, the Decrees of Popes, the Confessions of National Churches, may be justly, be reasonably defended by any Man who is sensibly persuaded, that the same are truly stated, righteously ordain'd, wisely deliver'd, and well drawn up: But when any Doctrines or Canons, Decrees or Confessions, are defended, not for sake of their own Truth and Excellence, but in reverence to the Authority of the Authors, a Reverence is paid that shows what they are desert, because a greater cannot be paid to God Almighty. We can but submit our Judgments to the Revelations of God; and it is lawful for us to examine, nay 'tis our commendation to examine how far those Histories are to be trusted which give us an account of his Revelations: Having once satisfy'd our selves in this point, [and as to the Histories of the Old and New Testament, we have his full Evidence, that's my Opinion, and I am sure the Utilitarians generally are here then willing to do but yet examine [with the best skill we have in Languages, and Customs of the old Jews, and first Christians, by regarding the Genius, Style, and Design of Sacred Writers, &c.] what is the true and proper signification of the Words which we read, what sense arises from them. Contradictions to natural Reason cannot be the true sense of the words, Difficulties may; such is the Dogmatism of the Reformation: If we submit our Judgments in any case but this, where we are sure of a Divine Revelation, and where we are sure of the sense of the sacred Penman's words, we pay an excessive Reverence to the Authority of Men: but I believe that those Gentlemen who profess to submit their Judgments to the Church, have no other aim, but to court the Church for favour, or cheat her inspection with a Complement. ¶ There's no avoiding such a thought as this, when the solemn and publick Judgment and Declaration of a Vice-chancellor and Heads of one of our Universities, condemning the *Doctrines of these infinite distill*

*Article and Substances in the Trinity, as False, Impious, and Heretical, contrary to the Doctrine of the Catholic Church, and of the Church of England, is made a Jest, and rejected with bold, contemptuous and angry Railery. All that the Church of England requires of us is, I humbly conceive, such a Reverence and Esteem as I first describ'd, a wise Submission, a Reverence join'd with Honesty, and a good Understanding, a Submission, according as may be gather'd from the sixth of her 39 Articles; because she does not, as she ought not, ordain any thing contrary to God's Word written; because the expounds Scripture, one place consonant to another; because she is a faithful Keeper of Holy Writ, decrees nothing against the same; and besides the same enforces nothing as necessary to Salvation. The Church does not pretend to Infallibility; the most eminent, Sons shall say, or Fathers of the Church, look upon her Articles as Forms in a comprehensive Latitude, drawn up for Peace sake; and very conscious are they that the Church of the last Age was *Calvinist*, the Church of the present Age *Arminian*, and all the while it was Church of *England*; but when bold Opinions shall not be content to keep themselves within the accountable bounds of prudential Latitude, but start odd Notions, not at all distinguishable from Heathenish Polytheism, then they who dispute against them enter into Religious Controversy, mov'd thereunto by a very just Motive. But perhaps it may be urg'd, that the Polytheists did not begin the Quarrel: Well, suppose it; what will they gain by that Plea, if still their Doctrine is no other than Polytheism? And what if it should appear that the Unitarians gave the first occasion of Dispute; this will create no Prejudice against them, in the Minds of considering Men: for as far as I can perceive, they took Exceptions not against the Articles, but the Scholastick Terms of the Church; and drove at nothing farther, than that scholastick Propositions, which are called *Mysses*, might be express'd as far as the Subject would admit, in words plain and intelligible; and when that could not be, in the very Phrase of Scripture. The Unitarians, if I take them right, cannot yet submit their Judgment, so as not to prefer Scripture-Phrase before Scholastick Terms; tho' they are such lovers of Peace, that it has been again and again declar'd, that when nothing is meant by all these Terms of Art which is contrary to Reason, or not consonant to Scripture, they will not contentiously decline the use of them. They have said as much in some of their Prints, and I should not do them justice, if I did not take notice of it. They are also ready to pay due reverence to the Church, because of her great Candour and Moderation in not expecting from good Christians a submission of Judgment as to the use of Religious*

Religious Rites and Ceremonies; something more hardly once she treated them, but now (God be thanked) she is come to a true Christian Temper; so that I reckon, the Toleration which Parliamentary Authority has indulg'd, is enjoy'd by conscientious Separatists with the consent of the Church; for it were uncharitable to suspect that she is not the same now, as a while ago in the time of her danger: And therefore I think that those warmer Zealots, who entertain their Auditories with Invectives against the Toleration, do not only slight the Authority of King and Parliament, but also bring a Scandal upon the Church. It is but just to believe that the Church is pleas'd with the Toleration for this other reason, because she gets more by that, than ever she did by violence; for it is visible that our Parochial Churches are fuller now than when we compell'd Men to come in. But enough of this, tho it is not altogether out of the way; for this also tends to declare on what accounts a reverential esteem is due to the Church; and on what respects the vindication of her Honour is a just Motive of entering into Religious Controversy: but a blind submission of Judgment to all that the Church already has decreed, or may decree hereafter, is a senseless slavish Stupidity. An implicit Faith in all her Articles, is more than she does require; a taking up always with the first obvious, literal Grammatical Sense, is more than the most, and the most learned Doctors, Priests and Bishops themselves do.

2. The Persons, of whom I have been speaking, were prompted, as may be gather'd from their Prints, to enter into Religious Controversy by an indignation against all Innovations in Religion. As specious a look as this Motive has, it must be very well circumstanc'd, before it can be allow'd for a just and reasonable one; for it happens many times, that the Innovation is but formid'd and suspected; and perhaps there would not be half the Differences which there are in the Church, if words which have not all of them determinate and distinct Ideas, if terms of Art and equivocal Phrases were expounded, and fix'd by exact and plain Definitions. Foreign Protestants are apt to suspect that the Church of England favours the Doctrine of Transubstantiation, because she expresses her self by that ambiguous Phrase, *Real Presence*; they are afraid lest Real Presence should signify Corporeal Presence: But when the Church avows, that she does not use the word *Real* in that sense, but means only a *Spiritual* Presence, apprehended and enjoy'd by Faith, the occasion of dispute is remov'd, and all that can be said against the Church, is, that her Language is not so proper, as her Faith is pure. Therefore that celebrated Hugonot *Jurist*, was more angry than the Cause deserv'd, when he join'd Transubstantiation and Real Presence together, and call'd 'em both Mon-

sters.

fiers: which harsh Censure cannot be return'd upon his Accomplishment
 of Prophecies, for that's an ingenious, learned, pretty thing: the Events
 of History have an agreeable resemblance to the Apocalyptic Emblems to
 which he applies them: but for all that, I believe there's not one word of
 truth in his Interpretative Accomplishment. By the Form of Absolution
 in the Visitation of the Sick, one might be apt to suspect, that it was
 the Doctrine of our Church, that God has given power to our Priests that
 now are, to forgive sins: but yet the generality of our Priests, abhorring
 delusive Priest-craft, make no more of it than a meer Declaration, that
 God forgives the Sinner, supposing he be truly penitent: When they
 have thus explain'd themselves, no Body can quarrel their Doctrine: and
 who would fall out with them for an awkward way of expressing it? Ever
 give me Catholic, Orthodox Doctrine, tho' veil'd under oblique
 and less proper Phrase, rather than gross affected Trithicism, openly avow'd,
 and in distinct plain words express'd, in words and phrase sacred
 and proper, that every understanding unbiass'd Reader may at first sight
 apprehend it. Now by explaining and defining, the occasion of Dispute
 is remov'd: indeed some Disputants define *Ignorant per Ignorantiam*, one ob-
 scure ambiguous word, term, phrase, by another more obscure and am-
 biguous: they mend the matter well; but still, plain and clear Defini-
 tions make short work of Controversy: The Disputants quickly see by this
 means where 'tis they differ, if so be they do differ; for not rarely it hap-
 pens, they discover that they were of one and the same mind, tho' they
 did not express their thoughts after one and the same manner. I am very
 much mistaken, or this is the very Case between the suspected Unitari-
 ans, and the Nominal Orthodox Trinitarians who suspected them: In-
 deed as to the Realists, there is a wide difference between them, and both
 the former: their Trithicism is Innovation with a Witness, and a just Mo-
 tive for their Opposers to engage in Religious Controversy. Again it may
 happen, that the Innovation comes to no more than the reviving a long-
 buried Truth, or the rubbing the rust off from a corrupted Usage: for
 Truths certain and useful have run like Rivers under ground for several
 Ages; and then their first appearance afterwards may be call'd Innovation; but
 that will not justify any Man's contending for his old Errors; no, tho'
 his old Errors have liv'd for several Ages. The eating and drinking the
 Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ by Faith, to other Day was a
 meer Innovation; yet I do not believe that our Real Trinitarians will say,
 that the Anthropophagous Romanists, the human Flesh and Blood-eat-
 ing Papists, had reason with Fire and Sword to oppose it. The cry of
 Innovation is sometimes made use of, to secure a beloved false Doctrine

from being considered; a superstitious cheating Practice from being undenied. Where a protest Establishment is without fault, no innovation can be for: but a departing from the Language of the Schools, is not the same thing as departing from the Faith. Yet that our Differences may be accommodated in some tolerable manner, let sound Religion, say I, be taught in barbarous Language; better so, than Trinitarian cloth'd with words pure and proper, and phrase elegantly plain; for that's but like *Marshall's* fine Amber-Box, with nothing but a Viper and a dead Fly in it.

g. Both Realists and Nominalists, as themselves profess, and I believe, honestly have entered into Religious Controversy, to vindicate the Christian Religion, the main Foundation of which, they once (by mistake) readily thought that the Unitarians were undermining, and labouring to overthrow. It is good to be jealous for the honour of the Christian Religion; but nevertheless it is a just, and a very unchristian one, to charge any Man unjustly: for an unjust Charge of this high nature, robs innocent Persons of the Comforts and Advantages which they might chance to have in the good opinion of others; and not only so, but exposes them to the dire Effects of that Zeal, which is too hot even to have mercy, and too passionate ever to consider matters calmly, deliberately, and as they ought to be consider'd. When the Realists and Nominalists first suspected the Unitarians of entertaining such wicked and detestable thoughts, as to undermine and subvert the main Foundation of the Christian Religion, it would have extremely become them, to have carefully weigh'd what are the sure and certain Truths, which may be reasonably call'd the Foundation of the Christian Religion; and what are the less certain Doctrines and Speculations, concerning which, Men that lead virtuous and Christian Lives, are differently persuaded. But now in their anger and their heat, they have condemn'd the Unitarians as Heretics, for not giving the true sense of some Articles, whose true sense they themselves have not yet found out, nor yet agreed upon. One would think that a mistaken Expulsion of an obscure Article did not tend to the Subversion of the Christian Religion; but they have judg'd it otherwise; yet to do them right, let furious merciless Judges, they use as much equity as could be with'd, carrying on their severe Censures with a remarkable Impartiality. The Trinitarian Trinity (say one of them) is wiser even than *Sacra Scriptura*; The Nominal Trinity (*say another*) is no bad; in which last Sentence, I shall not contradict them; but one thing I must remark, viz. That when the Purposes in which Men agree are none of the best, the gaining their Point is but removing an Obstacle which hinders them from vexing one another.

another. There are some great Men, who (out of what Christian Principles, neither I, nor they can tell) would have the *Galatians* be tickled by themselves, and by consequence burnt by themselves, without the company of any of them who commit the very fault, or a more heinous fault: For which purpose they solicit the Magistrates, after the manner of Inquisitors, *Omni affectu quo possunt*, but without the Hypocrisy of the Inquisitors; for these great Men do not call for Fire in plain words, which the other mean when they require Heresy, and to justify the Exemption of whom they plead from Heresy and the State. To-day this Dream was told: — "A Man may be very right in the belief of an Article, and yet be mistaken in his Explication of it."

I call this a Dream, meaning no disrespect in the World to the Author, for manifestly being *derisorio* *Ministerio*, but because it appears as the very first sight an inconsistent Notion: now pleading Dreams Men are unwilling to part with, therefore a Friend is call'd in to give credit to this; but as ill luck would have it, all which that Friend says, is "That a Man may quit his Explication, without parting with the Article itself: That is, Dr. B. may quit his Explication, and so may every other Reader, without parting with the Article of the Trinity. But under favour, he that quits the new Explication, quits the Article itself, or it is impossible to quit it. To speak seriously, one would wonder how it could enter into the thoughts of a wise Man being awake, to imagine that an Article might be rightly believ'd, and was not rightly understood. If it be objected, that I alter the Case, and should have wond'ed that that was not rightly explain'd: Empty. The thing is the same for I presume that the Author from whom I beg leave to dissent, will obligingly grant me, That the Explication, whom he would free from Heresy, understands as he explains: I am sure he's a Knave if he does not, and for such a Heresy is an innocent thing, in comparison with political Knavery. To declare publicly that an Article may be rightly believ'd, which is not rightly understood! If antinomian, or any Form of theirs had done it, without question he had been plentifully reprov'd. Mr. J. E. B. O. would not have call'd the occasion, but have arriv'd his late Rhapsody of railing, with Enthusiastic argumentation, as well as ill-manners. How! an Article rightly believ'd, tho' not rightly understood! — To be what Justice states their persecutors to Boston take us with, to have their Hierodoloxes from the Imputation of Heresy, and themselves from the peril of the State! What Idea can there be had of to self-contradicting a Proposition? Indeed to such a sharp Reproof as

this, I don't for what could have been reply'd by any Unitarian of them all, or by Mr. Lock, or Mr. Toland either [as much Friends as they are (tho neither side knows it)] to the Unitarians. But then those Gentlemen are not capable of such an elevated Thought; it is not possible for any one to rise so high, but a vast, ready, profound Scholar, who does not judge concerning the Truth of a Proposition, by the Agreement or Disagreement of the Ideas contain'd in it, but by a sort of Reason, which what it is, and how it operates, no Conception can be had, nor Account given. But whatever Mr. J. E. would have done had this contradictory Notion been started by an Unitarian, I shall deal gently with it, observing only, that, for whose sake soever it was made publick, it will save all that Assent and Consent to an Article, as it lies in the Words of the Church, of what Denomination soever they are, and how plainly contradictory soever their Explanations; it will save all alike, all, or none. But the Unitarians want not this Plea to defend their Cause, for they profess to believe the Article of the Trinity; nay, and what is more, they explain that Article to the very same Sense as do the Nominalists, for Peace sake submitting even to the Scholastick Terms, which they cannot like so well as the very Phrase of Scripture. Now I cannot imagine how these Unitarians, so very orthodox, and so exactly conformable to the Church, can be left alone in the lurch for Hereticks, unless it be prov'd, that, as one Man may be right in the Belief of an Article, tho he be wrong in the Explication; so another may be right in the Explication of an Article, tho he be mistaken in the Belief of it. But after all these things which may be rightously pleaded in behalf of the Unitarians, it must not be denied but that their Adversaries had a just Motive to enter into religious Controversy, while they suspected them of labouring to undermine the Christian Religion; only their Adversaries were to blame, that they did not more calmly and leisurely examine the Meaning of those Passages, whatsoever they were, at which they took Offence. I purpose to offer something now, to clear all Suspicions that the Nominalists may chance to entertain of the Unitarians: as for the Realists, no Accommodation can ever be between them and true Christians; great Men, out of the abundance of their Charity, may forgive the Trithelism of those Heathenish Writers, but by all their Wit and Learning they can never make Three infinite Minds to be but One God: nevertheless, I am content that they be forgiven, only I would not have so much Charity wasted to forgive them, that there be no Equity left for sincerer Christians. In order to clear the Suspicions which the Nominalists may chance to entertain of the Unitarians, that so there may be

no Simulations between them, no evil Grudgings, no base Language, no unchristian Reviling, I shall consider, 1. What manner of Persons those are, who of late have been distinguish'd by the Name of Unitarians. 2. What is the Tendency of their Doctrines. And this I propound to do, not by way of Answer to all the false and foul imputations which are vomited up by Mr. *Burgefs*, Mr. *Edwards*, or that over-bold Poetaster who makes so bold with the Almighty, as to subscribe himself God's most humble, most faithful, and devoted Servant, (but I suppose that that Gentleman will excuse himself, and say, all the World may know he did but complement) but in hopes to satisfy those fairer Disputants, such as Dr. *Pain* and Mr. *Norris*, whom, by their Christian Candor and Equity, one may with more Reason conclude heartily to believe the holy Religion which they profess. Yet it will not be proper to speak to the first Head, until I have premis'd a word to inform the Reader of what standing these Unitarians are: When the Papists ask the Protestants, Where was your Church before *Luther*? the Protestants, by way of Reply, pretend to find Christians through all Ages, tho' of divers Denominations, who are recorded to have held the same Opinions with them: in like manner, the Opinions which are at this day charg'd upon the Unitarians, may be trac'd up from Age to Age, to the very next times to the Apostles, and by their early Asserters were vouch'd as truly Christian and Apostolical; and in several Ages a great majority of Christian Professors holding the same, they then went for Orthodox. But our Church of *England*, bearing a great Reverence for Antiquity, is very zealous for the Retention of some old Philosophical Terms, yet as nice and careful in explaining the same according to Scripture and Reason; tho' at the same time, she, in the Persons of her most Orthodox Sons, is reproach'd by a few backsliding Trithemistick Realists, as if she agreed with those ancient Hereticks, said to be the Founders and Predecessors of the Unitarians. The Unitarians themselves, I mean the English of late so call'd, think it an Injury to be term'd *Ebionites*, *Alogians*, *Arians*, *Photinians*, &c. or indeed any thing but Christians; but when they are reproach'd by those Names of distinction, they cannot forbear noting that the very Apostles Creed has lain under the Suspicion of *Arianism*, *Photinianism*, &c. God knows how justly; for we have some Orthodox Doctrines, which if they are contained in that Creed, are yet so covertly contain'd there, that it is not every ordinary Reasoner that can espy them, and by a long Train of just Consequences deduce them, and bring them into light. By the Apostles Creed however, and by the Holy Scriptures, the Unitarians are always willing to be

be tried, and mean not to make a Peace-disturbing Schism from the Church of England, at least not as long as the chief Doctors of the Church profess, That by none of her Homilies, Creeds, or Canons, they mean any such thing as a Trithemick Trinity, a Trinity with three distinct infinite Minds. The present Term of Reproach (with which some Men, for want of better Argument, hope to confound the Unitarians) is *Socinian*. Now it must be confess'd, That the Unitarians think honourably of *Socinus*; but yet they do not espouse his whole Scheme; not any thing of his Scheme, because it is his; nor any thing more of his Scheme than is espous'd by their *Arminian* Nominalist Brethren, who are a great majority of the Church, tho' the Animadvertiser may not love to hear of it. *Socinus's* Life is in Print among us, both Latin and English: the Memory of the Man is frequently revild; but I do not hear that his Adversaries undertake to refute the historical Account which the Protestant Knight has given of him. Mr. *Bidl*, in his Preface, has these Words of *Socinus*, "He took the same course to propagate the Gospel, that Christ and the Apostles had done before him, forsaking his Estate, and his nearest Relations, and undergoing all manner of Labours and Hazards to draw Men to the Knowledge of the Truth; He had no other End of all his Undertakings, than the Glory of God and Christ, it being impossible for Calumny to self to asperse him with the least Suspicion of worldly Interest. He, of all Interpreters, explaineth the Precepts of Christ in the strictest manner, and windeth up the Lives of Men to the highest Strain of Holiness."

The Author of the *Growth of Error* makes it an Article against *Socinus*, that he accus'd the Reformed of Immoral Practices, and boasted of the Holiness of his own Followers. But what says that Author? Was *Socinus's* Accusation unjust, or his Boasting rash and ill grounded? Why, he says, *Ansuer answer'd Socinus*; but it seems he confesses too, that *Abelingsma* defended him. Upon the whole matter, to speak impartially, Excepting that the foreign Unitarians are recorded to have sometimes dealt hardly with one another upon account of their different Fustianian conceiving worshipping Jesus Christ, it does not appear that their Lives were wicked and unchristian. Here in England Men that know little of them, or have Ends in traducing them, load them with heavy Imputations; but impartial Men abroad, who have known and observed them, notwithstanding they differ from them, do yet bear honourable Testimony to their Piety and Virtue. Monsieur *Beau*, a Protestant Officer in the French Army, in his *Religion of the Dutch*, Anno 1673, gives this Account of the Socinians in Holland: "They

"have

have their secret Assemblies, in which they are very fervent in Prayer to God, with groaning and weeping. — They affirm that they have no Interest in the maintaining their Doctrine, save only the Persuasion they have of its Truth, and the Zeal of appropriating to the only individual and sovereign God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Glory of his Divinity. — They are confirm'd in their Faith by reading the Word of God, and by the Books which have been written against them. — Their Conversation is holy and without Reproach, as far as Men can judge by what they see. Much more this impartial Gentleman, none of their Party, says to their Praise. Even of the English Unitarians, one of our Reverend Bishops disputing against them, when he look'd upon them as altogether Socinianiz'd, fairly professes, that he judges they would not think so meanly of our Lord Christ, but for fear of taking away from the Honour of God Almighty. But I have a Word or two to offer to the Reverend Bishop of *Sarum*, before I speak of the English Unitarians of this last Age. As ill as he thinks now of these Unitarians, I hope he will not retract the noble Character which he once gave of one *George Van Parr*, a Dutch-man, burnt in *England* 1549 for Unitarianism, which he could not in Conscience abjure: He led a very exemplary Life for Fasting, Devotion, and a good Conversation, and suffer'd with extraordinary Composure of Mind. It is out of the way to speak of *Barn. Logan*, [a Man of whose virtuous Behaviour the Bookellers of *Paris*, among whom he convers'd for 7 Years before his Execution, gave a good account] for he was an *Arian*, burnt *Am.* 1611, re-burnt this last Year by Mr. *Gailtherid*: but it is a better Argument for that poor Man's Sincerity in his Religious Persuasion, that he could endure to be burnt for it, than it is for the Sincerity of Mr. *Gailtherid*, and the Honour of Calvinism, that he thirsts after the Blood of thousands, and demands all Orders and Degrees of Men that do not forward his Executions. But that no ill-minded Person may hence take occasion to say, that I insinuate that the Unitarians are a numerous Body; I openly declare, that whether they are many or few, is more than I know, or care, who am an impartial, tho' not always a melancholy By-stander: But that they are better than some Christians, and more faithful Subjects, than the revengeful Calvinists, will appear to any Man that examines the Writings of both Sides. I now come to speak of those Persons of this last Age who have been distinguish'd by the Name of Unitarians.

Anthony Wood, in his *Albena Oxoniensis*, 2d Vol. p. 197---199. gives a large Account of *John Bidle*, and says among other very commendable

ble things, that being Master of *Christ's School* in *Gloucester*. "He was much esteem'd for Diligence in his Profession, Severity of Manners, and Sanctity of Life. And when he came to converse in *London*, after many Years imprisonment, "He was very taking for his religious Discourse and Saint-like Conversation. Now Mr. Wood, I presume, cannot be suspected of Partiality in favour of an Unitarian. *John Knapp* test'd the Sincerity of his religious Persuasion, by his Death; for he took that School in *Newgate*, whereof he died a days after Removal.

Mr. Cooper succeeded Mr. *Bills* Master of *Christ's School* in *Gloucester*, afterwards Minister of *Cheltenham* in *Gloucestershire*; and after the Act of Uniformity, Minister of an Unitarian Congregation in this Place. We appeal to all that knew him, whether he was not a Man always compos'd and grave, but of a most sweet and obliging Temper and Conversation. He suffer'd those Abuses from intemperate and riotous Men, when the Nation was running mad they knew not for what, that it broke his Health, and hasten'd his End. His Daughter *Mary* died about a Year and a half since, a known Unitarian; so that the Minister who preach'd her Funeral Sermon commended her to his Auditors for a Pattern of Christian Virtues, however erroneous in her Judgment. Mr. Cooper was succeeded in the Guidance of an Unitarian Congregation by *Ralph Taylor*, *Henry Sturmy*, *Thomas Macock*, and *Allen Fawcett*, all of them very serious and diligent in their way, devout and pious, strictly honest, and charitable to their power; however not so accomplish'd in Humane Learning.

John Knowles of *Gloucester*, by long and diligent Study, became very knowing in the Critical Learning of the Scriptures; his much Reading, and Thoughtfulness, won him to Unitarianism, having in his younger Years been an Independent. His regular Piety and Virtue were exemplarily conspicuous in divers Stations and Stages of his Life. His Labours were directed to the Benefit of others, the greater Fruit of them to himself, was Dangers and hard Usages. His Patience was tried by undeserv'd Injuries, and Imprisonment even in the time of the raging Plague. Dying, he bequeath'd some Books of value to the Library at *Gloucester*; and a Third of all he had, for the Relief of Men persecuted for Religion, and other Charities. He also was an Unitarian Teacher while he liv'd in *London*. After the Year of the Plague, he convers'd frequently among the Clergy; his Learning, and Sermonings in Religion, was well known among them, of whom several are now living.

Mr. Gilbert Clark was Fellow of Sidney College in Oxbridge; which Place he was oblig'd to leave for Conscience sake: after that, he liv'd long at *Stanford*, well known and esteem'd by Dr. *Comberland* the Reverend Bishop of *Exeter*, who us'd to speak of him by the Name of *Honest Gilbert*. He was Author of two of those Tracts call'd *Tracts* 1702, &c.

Mr. *Nesbit*, late Rector of *Tyde St. Giles* near *Witch* in the Isle of *Ely*, was a Man of singular Piety, and winning Conversation. His Writings testify his excellent Learning. He was complain'd of to his Reverend Diocesan, for omitting those parts of the Liturgy, which, after some Years of Study and Consideration he came to be persuaded against. We appeal to the Reverend Bishop, and even to all the Clergy of *Ely*, especially to him that preached his Funeral Sermon last *Trinity Sunday*, whether he deserv'd not the Character giv'n him.

I ought not to conclude the Account which I give concerning the Persons of the Unitarians, without taking notice of Mr. *Thomas Fearn*. I have known him intimately these 6 or 7 Years, and do now mourn the Loss of the best Man I ever knew: but upon the strength of so short an Acquaintance, had I never so great Abilities, I ought not to presume to draw his just and full Character: let the Reader expect that, as I will, from one of his dearest eldest Friends. Yet something I am oblig'd to offer, not only by my Gratitude to his Memory, but in proper Justice to the Arguments before him.

Mr. *Thomas Fearn* is now gone to his Rest, but has left behind him a good Name, a Name esteem'd with the highest Esteem among the greatest and best Men, not of our Nation only, but of the distant Countries: for it pleas'd God to inspire him with a wonderful measure of true Christian Charity, so that he look'd upon himself as oblig'd to his by and labour no less a Work, than the Good of Mankind to posterity. One while he was busy in providing for the Poor, both at home and abroad, as far as his wide and honourable Friendships, his own great Acquisitions, his apprehensive understanding, constant Industry, and Application could carry him: In providing for the Poor, his Charity was regular and prudent: he consider'd what was fitting to be allow'd to the Unhappy, reduc'd by some common-Calamity of Providence, and what was necessary for the Support of the Sick and the Agent of those Persons and Children. As for poor People, able to work, he rightly judg'd, the best Charity was to find them Work; he did it for thousands: And till the Great Council of the Nation shall make effectual Provisions in this weighty matter, thousands will be sadly sensible of the

Life of Mr. Thomas Firmin. At another time he join'd his Counsels and Labour to advance the Trade of England; and to whatever good Work he join'd his hand (which he did to many) the same proceeded much more successfully through his hearty and active Concurrence. On all Occasions he was ready, and sincere in discountenancing Deism: for tho he was perswaded there might be Deists, that were vertuous and good Men, upon the sole Belief of the Existence of God, and the Expectance of future Recompences; yet he thought Deism nothing so firm a Foundation of true Virtue and Goodness, as the Gospel Revelation. He made himself one in the Society for Reformation of Manners; and no good Man of that number was more zealously affected, by wise and legal Methods to suppress Profaneness and Irregularities, which he well knew, loosen'd the Bands of all Society, and made Man to Man a more dangerous Enemy than biting Serpents, or devouring Bees. In short, as an honest Civil, his chief Aim was, the Prosperity of Old England: With respect to Religion, his ardent Desire was, first, to convince the World that Natural and Reveald Religion both, oblig'd them to be morally honest; and then to promote universal Love and Goodwill among Men, morally honest, however dissenting, in Opinions differently perswaded. But God never intended him, as he was himself deeply beloved, to go about doing Good, and incur an Envy; to shine conspicuously in his Generation with the Splendour of good Works, and meet no flatted or Opposition. That which Mr. Firmin met with, proceeded sometimes from the Jealousies and Fears of Ecclesiasticks, ambitious for their Honour, Learning, and Richs; but more is to be ascribed to the World to judge, whether their Jealousies and Fears, or his Goodness was most to blame. But what was Jealousy and Fear only in the Minds of some malicious Ecclesiasticks, was Passion and Envy-Zeal, and the over-burdening of an unchristian Brest in others of a lower form, which I will not say but their weaker Judgments might look upon as a place of good Service to God, and it is not impossible for them, to have suppos'd it the easiest way to serve themselves. But had Mr. Firmin been the Hermit, which they represented him, it would not have miscomfited them to have heard him give all Labour for the sake of his truly Christian Conversation. For wise Men will always set a greater Value upon a good Life, than a clear-lighted Understanding, and never confuse a suppos'd Heresy (which does not engage in Professions or immoral Practices), with penal Indictions in

Book of commanding Heresies, all to come to the same end, viz. to bring down to the ground the pride of man, and to bring up to the knowledge of God, and to the love of his neighbour.

I will not here dispute what I have once heard from Mr. Fenn's own Mouth, viz. That a venerable Prelate, or two, had lately charg'd him as a Promoter of Deism, which, they said, was the Road to Atheism. At this Charge the good Man was extremely concern'd; not that he admitted the Charge, or the Aggravation of it, to be true, (for he was thoroughly satiated at whole dozes that Guilt lay,) but concern'd he was, that he should be so unhappy, as to be in such manner misjudg'd by Persons of their Worth and Character; whereupon he was more frequent in his Advices to his friends, that they would be diligently careful of their Conversation, that they would turn the Company (as much as their lawful worldly Business permitted) of immortal Men, but especially of those who question'd the Truth of the Christian Revelation. He thought indeed better of a moral Deist than of a wicked Man professing Christianity; yet no one call'd solemnly of the Christian Revelation in his Company, but was sure of a still and publick Reproof. I could add more to his Praise on this Topic, but I hope to see it done by one much longer and better acquainted with him than myself. I think Mr. Fenn ought not to have been look'd upon with an evil eye by any of the Church of England; I am sure the moral Differences of the most learned and pious of the Clergy in his time, differ not at all from his Sentiments, but rest on the same Foundations which he built upon; viz. the Foundations of natural Reason, and constant Christian Revelation. 'Tis true, he did differ from some, as they differ from one another, in some speculative Opinions; and I will say that for his other Discours, wherein the Clergy differ'd among themselves, each Party thought Mr. Fenn in the more reasonable Error; so that if Heresy had been doom'd to the Fire, the Church would have been almost half destroyed before it had come to his turn, and there was nothing wishing to name either those that charg'd, or those that defend'd him; but might I have the liberty which some Philosophick Fathers, after their Conversion from Paganism, made bold with, I would present at a Publick Argument, and by a proper *Proposita* introduce Mr. Grigg, Dr. Zuckew, or Archbishop Tillotson, vindicating the Honour of their dear Friend. Had they been now living, they would have done it effectually. I am conscious I cannot put into their mouths Words worthy them or him; but the least they would have said, must have supported thus much. — He exposes his own Judgments, who accuses Mr. Fenn of Heresy; he proclaims himself an ill Man, who questions his Morality.

Against his worst Enemies, those that could take Offence at nothing but the Virtue and Reputation of the Man, I shall not inveigh severely: It is enough to say, the *Coffee-man* can have no Comfort in his Scandal, which no body will credit: and as for Mr. *Burgess*, he took it up, not from any manner of Probability, [even his own Printer, and several others, told him it was a horrid Calumny] but out of pure Zeal against what he calls *Satanianism*, because he knows no better. It was this which made him talk, in his fanciful way, about drinking Oats, and sweet-scented Panthers, painted Snakes, and immoral Poison. But, whether it pleases him or not, the injur'd Man's fair Fame has taken Wing, and is not to be bounded within our narrow Seas, or blasted by his envious Metaphors. The Masters of Oratory say, those Metaphors ought to be shunn'd which are borrow'd & *re-turp*, and *jeu d'esprit*; and those which are too far stretch'd, had better have been let alone: but if a Man is above these Rules, then with his Oats, Snakes, and Panthers, he may make what work he pleases; and if he be minded, at one bold Stroke to defy all Rules, and ridicule his own Discourse, let him represent the famous Business of improving Sin, by snuffing a Candle.

By accident, our Enemies often happen to do us greater Kindness than our Friends. So happen'd it to Mr. *Firmin*; All that convers'd with him were extremely taken with the soft, agreeable, and endearing Conversation of the Man; but what a Friend says in such a case, is often suspected to have more of Affection than Truth in it: but Providence, in turning the Pains of Mr. *Firmin*, mov'd an Enemy to bear Testimony to his Honour; for one that with a malevolent eye observ'd him, represents him as a Man of *Scimus's* Make, complaisant and sweet even to such as oppose and detest his Heresy. Now I know of no Heresy which he had; I am sure he did not take the Occasion of *Scimus* upon content, but agreed with, or differ'd from, that Writer, as he saw think: if he had any thing in him bordering upon Heresy, it was his Obstinateness in believing with his own Understanding those things only which appear'd to him credible, agreeable to Holy Scripture, and not contradictory to Natural Reason: but his Conversation indeed, that (as his Enemy says) was always complaisant and sweet; for, alas! he was bred a Christian, and never us'd to return railing for railing. But by the way, if a sweet good Nature be an Heretical Temper, then a furious ill Nature must be an orthodox Temper, and then this Term of Art, *Orthodox*, will at last become but another Word for *Unchristian*.

Who would have imagin'd that the Wit of an Enemy should have ad-
 vanc'd against Mr. *Firmis* such an Objection, as that *He was not bound*
ad to the Poor with his own or other Folks Money? Both parts of the Dis-
 junction are true; but to suppose only the latter so, that proves that
 Mr. *Firmis* was well known for a faithful and prudent Dispenser of Cha-
 rity: and to suppose he had nothing of his own to give, which is spitefully
 insinuated; yet even this redounds to his Honour, for it is not a very com-
 mendable thing, if there were no more in't, for a Man to spend so much
 of his time upon the Poor? I am apt to think it was offence taken at the
 ill Lives of the Christians, rather than the Doctrine of Christianity,
 which made the renown'd *Aurelius* wish, that his Soul might rest with
 the Philosophers: now have I that awful regard for the Virtue and Piety
 of Mr. *Firmis*, that let his Adversaries revile him, and call him Heretic
 as long as they please; I cannot forbear praying, may my Soul rest with
 this thrice excellent and truly Christian Unitarian.

It is to spare the Reader's farther trouble, that I deduce no longer a
 Catalogue of English Unitarians, not long since deceas'd, who were
 neither Atheists, nor Deists, nor Profane, nor immoal Persons, (as is
 the Cry of some now when they have spent all their fair Arguments,
 and disavow their Efficacy) but seriously religious, fully satisfied of the
 truth of the Christian Revelation, devout, honest, and charitable.

If it be objected that the Unitarians lately deceas'd, whom I have now
 character'd, separated themselves from the Church of England, and
 form'd religious Assemblies to themselves apart; and therefore the Uni-
 tarians now living cannot pretend to the Title of Orthodox Churchmen.
 I reply, 1. That as for the Unitarians deceas'd, it is probable to me,
 that they separated [after such manner as they did separate, which how
 far it was, I have not been made acquainted], that they might not seem
 to profess a Trinitarian Trinity, compos'd of three distinct Infinite Minds
 and Substances: for in their time our eminent Ecclesiasticks had not
 so particularly explain'd themselves against that heathenish Notion.
 2. There may be a conscientious Separation from the Church by Men that
 agree with her in Doctrinals: such I take the Separation of the Presby-
 terians, Independents, and Anabaptists to be. 3. The Unitarians now
 living being lately satisfied that the Majority of the Doctors of the
 Church, do not mean by their scholastick Terms still retain'd, any such Tri-
 nity as is plain Trinitarianism, but such a Nominal Trinity as the Bishop of
Sarum and Dr. S.— have explain'd, and as the Learned Bishop of *Wes-*
cester has spoke of, tho' a little obscurely, which learned Men cannot
 help; and having therefore publickly profess'd their Agreement with the
 Church.

Church of England on this and other disputed Articles; I thought not in reason but to look upon them as sound and orthodox Members of the Church of England and to their Faith. If it be so objected; That there is in some of the first Points of these Unitarians something very like a formal Opposition of the Articles of the Church: It is to be considered they have of late answer'd for themselves, confessing that such or less accurate Expressions may have been us'd by both Parties, of which neither ought to take advantage, because (which is originally a Trinitarian's Argument, but the Nominalists acquiesce in't) there is no Persecutor's Intention on either side: Nay, the Unitarians have declar'd that those Passages in their Writings, (which might be vitell'd by an ill-usur'd Adversary to their Disadvantage) be interpreted according to their true and honest and careful explaining their Minds.

ed and honest Man, (for all that Mr. Edwards says is not Gospel) yet it does plainly follow, that Mr. Edwards thinks he owes a defiance to an Antichristian, Idolatrous, dull, horrid lying Fellow, and that he is ready to expose the same; and by joining Mr. Bale's Person, [whom he represents as an Antichristian, &c.] he fully implies that it is his Resurrection, that the Office sanctifies the Person, tho the Person be an Antichristian, Idolatrous, dull, horrid lying Fellow. I hope without offence to any sober Man, it may be set down as an instance of Pride and this subtle Contrivance, That the holy Office of the spiritual Man should expiate whatever is done amiss by the Sinner: I word it gently, and don't pursue it so far as the matter leads. ¹⁰⁰ I have said what I had to say concerning the Persons of the late Deceased, and now living Unitarians; and as far as I perceive, the Men are honest, their Conversation blameless, the Holy Scripture is their Rule, and they interpret it according to the best of their understanding: nay, as good luck will have it, they interpret it just as the founder and major part of the Church does, and have always so interpreted it, tho they did not always perceive the Agreement between the Church and themselves: they are not as they have been odiously revild, Men of no seriousness in Religion, meer Deists, much less Atheists, or (as a Reverend Father out of the abundance of his Charity compliments them) impious prodigal Villains: but it is to be hop'd that he will reveal those bitter words, as hath been too often said. For I am sure they are resolv'd to make it plainly appear to the World, that his late Ship's Doctrine is some of his Books; and in some perhaps more, accords as much with the Reformed Catechism, as theirs: so that if there be not two Rules to judge of Heresy, one Fire will serve them and his Lordship both.

I come now to consider what is the Tendency of the Unitarian Doctrines: only one Question I have to premise: Supposing that the Conversation of these Men is such as becomes the Gospel (which from my Soul I believe), but that Doctrines false, and of mischievous Tendency: would it not have become their valious Adversaries [who by the Rules of the Gospel are oblig'd to believe the best which a Cause will bear], to have look'd upon them as Men erring through ignorance, and not perceiving the mischievous Tendency of their Doctrines? A good Man cannot promote a Doctrine which he knows to be false, or of mischievous Consequence; but a zealous or a proud Man is capable of supposing a Doctrine to be false, and of mischievous Consequence, which is nothing for it is old and dark.

Two ways the Unitarians defend their Doctrines from the Imputation of mischievous Consequence or Tendency: 1. By insinuating, cas-

fully, and largely explaining their Minds on those Articles which they were charg'd to deny, or expound amiss. 2. By making it appear, that they have no particular private Opinions about Matters commonly held necessary to Salvation, different from the Church of England's; i. e. if the Bishops and chief Doctors of the Church know what the Church means.

1. By ingenuously, &c. The Writer who drew up the Trinitarian Scheme, quotes not the Authors whence he drew it, I suppose, because his Design was to reprove the Errors of Men, and spare their Persons. Mr. Edwards, who knows not when his Friends are well us'd, tells him, he had *credible* Authors to vouch that Scheme: Sure he meant *credible*. But 'tis no new thing for Men of bustling Learning to forget their Mother-tongue. The Unitarian will not pretend to find credible Authors, i. e. Authors fit to be trusted, for the Scheme which he looks upon as erroneous; they may be credible in Matters of fact, in Matters of Faith not so. Matters of Faith are not to be taken on the bare Obedis of any Man's word: but if creditable, i. e. Authors of esteem, to vouch that Scheme, will content Mr. Edwards, he may have them in due time; and to be very civil to him, he shall be one.

Mr. Edwards fram'd a Socinian Creed, and quoted his Authors for every Article: a Unitarian Writer replied: but says Mr. Edwards, "That Gentleman in effect acknowledges that the Articles I fix on the Socinians are the very Doctrines and Sentiments of those Persons, worded as I set them down; and that the Authors whom I quoted deliver'd them in those very Terms, and that I have not misrepresented any of them. He that will may trust Mr. Edwards, but I for my part desire to be excus'd; for the Unitarian Writer in his *Agreement of the Unitarians with the Catholic Church*, does expressly affirm, "That he has examin'd some of Mr. Edwards's principal References, and can say of them, that they are either Perversions, or downright Falsifications, of what the Authors (referred to) did intend. It is true, he has alledg'd no Instances: but he seldom is long, on such an occasion, in a Friend's Debt. But on every Article of Mr. Edwards's Socinian Creed, he has ingenuously, accurately, and simply declar'd, what it is which the English Unitarians do believe; so all which Mr. Edwards returns only this Censure:—It is Higglings, or Dodging, or Recantation. Now if an ingenuous, accurate, and ample declaring what the English Unitarians do believe, be higglings, and dodging, who can help it? If it be Recantation, methinks Mr. Edwards should have rejoic'd, that his Labours had contributed to win Souls to the true Faith. But, alas! he is

afraid

1. The first thing I noticed when I stepped out of the car was the cold, crisp air. It felt like a fresh blanket after a long, hot summer. I took a deep breath, savoring the scent of pine and the distant sound of water.

2. The second thing I noticed was the silence. It wasn't a dead, empty silence, but a peaceful, almost reverent one. The only sounds were the rustle of leaves and the occasional chirp of a bird.

3. The third thing I noticed was the beauty of it all. The vibrant colors of the autumn foliage, the gentle slope of the hills, and the way the sunlight filtered through the trees, creating a dappled pattern on the ground.

4. The fourth thing I noticed was a sense of freedom. For the first time in a long while, I felt like I was truly living, not just existing. The worries of the world seemed to melt away, leaving only a sense of peace and contentment.

5. The fifth thing I noticed was the warmth of the sun on my face. It was a comforting, golden touch that reminded me of childhood days spent in the meadow.

6. The sixth thing I noticed was the softness of the grass beneath my feet. It felt like a plush carpet, inviting me to sit and enjoy the moment.

7. The seventh thing I noticed was the gentle breeze that carried the scent of wildflowers. It was a subtle reminder of the beauty that surrounded me, even in the most unexpected places.

8. The eighth thing I noticed was the way the colors of the leaves seemed to dance in the air. It was a magical sight, one that I had never before.

9. The ninth thing I noticed was the sound of my own heart. It was a steady, rhythmic beat that reminded me of the power of life and the beauty of the world.

10. The tenth thing I noticed was the feeling of being home. Not just a physical home, but a place where I belonged, where I was truly myself.

is done yet what the Socinians, who are called Deists, have done, namely, to show that Mr. Edwards tells every of these Points for nothing.— A Unitarian is a Socinian's Socinianism, made to Deism; Deism, in America. Their things, with him, necessarily hang together, like a Golden Chain of Thought. Yet I will show how new took the Links of this Chain; if he knows how, let him tell them. That a Unitarian is no Socinian, appears plain from the beginning, to which I hope to add some further Proof: that Socinianism does not tend to Deism, I will now offer some Reason; but Mr. Edwards must take it for an *Axiom*, which I need not show him in, but shall do it out of pure Charity, to convince him of his adventurous boldness at Calumny, and extreme Shortness at Argument. By Deism (I take it) is commonly meant, Natural Religion, founded on the belief of the Existence of a God, and of a future Life, with a Negation and Disbelief of all Revelation. Socinianism is not the Road to this Deism. I know not of any English Catechism which accounts the true Truth of the Christian Revelation, except the *Ravens*. Manifestly it is a Deficiency; and if Deism does abound so much, as Mr. Edwards says, surely there are faults, that our Youth, and other doleful, apprehensive (tho' not Book-learn'd) People should be instructed, in a plain Catechetical way, how the Authority of the Old and New Testament is to be prov'd. This may be learn'd in that Catechism of the Socinians which is call'd the *Ravens*; the first Chapter consists of near eight Leaves, proving that we have no just Grounds to doubt, but sufficient Reasons to persuade us to give Credence to the Holy Scriptures. Now the Arguments there us'd are not at all too weak; are not such as might give an adversary occasion to object that they mean to deny the Cause. See Mr. Edwards tell me what can be said more to the purpose, or better. In such a compass touching the Sufficiency, Chap. 1. touching the Certainty of Holy Scriptures, Chap. 2. The Socinians have declar'd themselves so plainly, so radically, so Orthodoxly, that their Imbitter'd Adversaries have nothing to find fault with. Now supposing that their Men were wisely mistaken about the Sense of several difficult Texts; yet who that had any Modesty left, would accuse them of inclining to Deism, of rejecting the Authority of Holy Scriptures, and denying the Truth of the Christian Religion? Let Mr. Edwards defend the Christian Religion, if he can; better than the Socinians have defend'd it; but if he has no stronger Arguments than they have us'd for that purpose, why would he have them suspected of Deism? To labour to persuade People that the Socinians, who have said so much

to establish the divine Authority of the Bible, do not themselves know
 it is necessary to others that it should be established; and
 enough cannot be said to establish their Authority: which is the business
 of all Men ought not to do, unless he himself be a man of Letters, which
 Impostition, as yet, I forbear to lay to his Charge: tho' in truth, in the
 last Book [which he calls *A Collection of Arguments for the Christian Religion*]
 but might better have intitled it *A Collection of Arguments for the Christian Religion*
 which, till the last fully appears, for it is one Argumented Epistle
 that makes work. It does not appear that he is a Christian. Queen
 Elizabeth had a Secretary, who when he return'd to Town, his Country
 Seat, was wont to lay aside his Cognizance of Honour, and then
 would, *Let there Lord Barleigh*; and then the grave Secretary would
 be very merry and game some. I take Mr. Edwards to have much of
 that honourable Gentleman's Humour, for I cannot imagine that he has
 utterly renounc'd Christianity: only perhaps when he writes or preaches
 Controversy, he cries, *Let us for a season, let us for a season* Christian;
 but the angry Storm once finished, or the Season over, he is the same.
 Mr. Edwards, as learned, as honest, and as good as I am, I will
 beg my Reader always to consider, that I desire so manifestly only
 this, it is not the Road to mere Deism: in the next place, I will prove
 that mere Deism is not the Road to Atheism. Deism, I demand to be
 Natural Religion founded on the Belief of the Existence of a God
 and of a future Life. These may, for aught I know, be the only
 would be enough finally, that believe not a word of the Bible to be true;
 but then I wish, if they were not so, would have them to be true
 through themselves from downright Atheism. To be it is all one to
 question the Existence of a God, and to question his future Punishments;
 but Natural Religion, which depends on the Belief of a God, and
 that he is a Rewarder, cannot be the Road to Atheism. I will not deny
 but that Mr. Edwards knows the Road to Atheism, as well as any man
 breathing, but he could not put it upon us, that Deism is the Road to
 he may as well bear us in hand, that sailing Eastward is the Road to the
West Indies. There cannot be a plainer Contradiction than to say,
 That the Belief of a God leads to the Belief of none. 'Tis the Atheism
 the prevailing Opinion, I grant to Mr. Edwards, we would gladly see
 it more near to the ruin and Subversion of Americans and Common
 wealths, Societies and Bodies Politick; but upon the Foundation of De-
 ism, &c. on the Foundation of Natural Religion, publick Peace and
 Order stood up before the days of the Christiana Revolution; and did
 it not so is among the neighbour Nations that have the *Levi* among

the Yoke, during the flourishing days of the growing Greatness of the
Atheists, and were I believe, as few Atheists as there are among
Christians now.

Let the malicious Adversary here pretend, that I plead the Cause of
Deism; I do not; that I do, I maintain that Deism is not the Road
to Atheism, as some have very weakly and imprudently have affirmed;
for it is not the Road to Christianity. I know Mr. Edwards will be
angry with me for what I am going to tell him; but let him summon
all the Powers and Skill he has in Logic, reasoning it with a dose of his
Nature against *Logic*, and then refute me if he can. There admit
That if the Man who is not yet a Christian, be an honest, moral Deist,
a Believer in God, and an Expecter of a future Judgement, he is, at least
a *candidate for Salvation*, and stands fair to be a Christian; no reveal'd
Religion offers so reasonable Grounds to win him as the Christian. Now
I must consider that to ingenuously and moderate a Man as Mr. Norris
should do with Mr. Edwards is so ignorant, invincible, and designing
an Assertion as this, viz. Deism is the Road to Atheism. Mr. Norris
cannot say of winning it. He that is once a Deist, is in a hopeless
way of being an Atheist whenever he pleases. No, Mr. Norris, no;
an honest moral Deist's Principles are directly pointed against Atheism;
but a pitiful, proud, and cruel Christian, is in very great danger of be-
ing an Atheist, if he be not one already. But perhaps Mr. Edwards
may reply, it is false that Mr. Deist, who never had been a Christian, but
that he is winning him. The Man who falls from Christianity to Deism is
in the Road to be an Atheist. To this I reply, That the Unitarians
are firmly persuaded of the Truth of the Christian Religion, yet they
need not make the Assertion thus explained to be true; for, what Chris-
tiansity teaches, beyond that which natural Reason dictates, has not the
Efficacy to convert Atheists, which natural Reason has; however, I am
sensible, and think the Unitarians ought to be so likewise, That the
Man who is a kind of a Buller should wear a Coat of Mail, as well as keep
out of Gun-shot.

I hope the Reader now plainly sees, that there is never a Link of
Mr. Edwards's Chain that will hold. The Unitarians are Orthodox [of
which more anon.] The Socinians are so far Orthodox, that they are
firmly persuaded of the Verity of the Christian Religion, and are not
mere Deists. Conscientious moral Deists are in no danger of being
Atheists. But is there no dangerous Road leading to Atheism, of which
Men ought to be warned, that they come not near it? Yes, there is,
and it is a wide Road too, paved all along with rich Confines, in Lan-
guage,

Dr. South, and Mr. Edwards, with them, I suspect, I shall find out, and
Doctors should rather be the Church, and Doctors, with enough to
make a Ministry, which shall be the Church, the Lord have mercy upon
the Unitarians, who it is not modest to suspect a disservice of
Conscience, but when he needs it, he will, but the Bishops and Doctors
should be more convinced with an incontestable Majority, the Unitarians
have nothing more to do, to prove that they have no particular private
Opinions about Matters commonly held necessary to Salvation, but to
show their Agreement with those Bishops and Doctors, or, which is
much the same thing, the Agreement of those Bishops and Doctors with
them; now this has been amply and fairly done by an Unitarian, I know
not whom, he being a perfect Stranger to me; but it matters not much
who he is, whether a Transmarine, or Calistone Divine, or no Divine at
all, it is nothing to the Cause that Mr. Edwards by drawing up a Creed
from Socinian Writers, mostly Foreigners, and publishing it as the Creed
of the Unitarians, gave this Unitarian an occasion to declare the sense of
himself and his Friends upon all those Points, which he has done in a Pa-
per called, *The Agreement of the Unitarians with the Catholics*. I think
Mr. Edwards takes no notice of this ingenious Declaration; but because
the Author has not also defended every unrefuted doctrine or extravagant
Saying, which this or that Socinian may have published, therefore he
triumphs, rubs his Forehead, and proclaims, That the Unitarian has not
one syllable to say for himself, or against him. Now in my judgment
the Unitarian might as well expect that Mr. Edwards should defend
the Plain Criticism which might be quoted from Dr. Calistone, Dr. Hays,
and the *Starbuck*, for what has the Unitarian more to do with the In-
genious Socinians, than Mr. Edwards has with their learned and val-
luntarian and Unitarian? For the Unitarian does not blindly follow the
Socinians, but while he takes up with some of their errors, interstrates
over difficult Points, he rejects them in others, even Mr. Edwards
himself, saying perhaps in some points with the storied Realists, set
over them for Orthodox Brethren, while he lets them keep their In-
fidelity to themselves; it were a very unfair thing in me, if I should pub-
lish the religious Frenzies of Mr. Edwards, which have been so well cha-
racterized by two honest Gentlemen, as parts of Mr. Edwards's Faith, I
much doubt whether he would be content to own all that I could quote
him out of the *Oxford Creed*, and the *Principles* of that Patron of his
whole Name, I say, is not to much the Name of a Person, or a Family,
as it is the Name of profound Learning, and solid Religion. I mention
not those Books as if I thought them full of Errors, for I have a greater
effort

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 which will doubtless produce the same result, may have now, by
 this Address, taken the most decided ground, which could be taken
 in favour of the Truth of the Resolutions, not the Uni-
 tarian ones, but Socinian Sentiments. By the way, were I a great Man,
 and my Pope would bestow some Spectable Decoration, I would borrow his en-
 couraging Bounty on an Ecclesiastic under such a most thankless Power,
 not but that the most Handsome Dec might have the most War, the most
 noblest Policy, and as little Confidence as any grave Person will whatever;
 but because an Ecclesiastic for a small matter will say all that he can to
 make a God of his Patron, while the other measures his Encomiums by
 the Number of the Guitars that are sold him. To return, the Socinian
 Persuasion is to be seen in the Racovian Catechism. The English Uni-
 tarian Sentiments in the *Apology*. See those such Sentiments there
 set down, no one that I know of has undertaken to refuse or change with
 Hence. But farther, from several Tracts of the Unitarians it appears
 that their Adversaries who have been distinguished by the Name of
 Nominalists, and who are a considerable Majority of the Church, do yet
 explain the controverted Articles to the very same Sense as do the Uni-
 tarians; I refer the Reader chiefly to the Discourse concerning the *Revo-
 lution and Real Transubstantiation*, to which I can add but little; yet some In-
 stances I shall produce, which make it plain that the Leaders of the Nominalists
 in the controverted Points differ as little from the Socinians, as
 the Unitarians do. The Racovian Catechism affirms that the Essence of
 God is but one in number, and that in the Essence of God there is but
 one Person. The first of the 39 Articles of the Church of England
 teaches, That in the Unity of the Godhead there are three Persons; this
 Doctrine the Learned Bishop of Worcester undertakes to defend, support-
 ing it, partly by the Scripture and by the Tradition. But if it be
 supported by neither, his Lordship has thrown away a great deal of Learn-
 ing to little purpose. *The true*, which has not the least Learning for this
 sort of Expense; but then if he spends much Labour in it, 'tis an in-
 dication of his Judgment. The different Explanations which the
 Racovian Catechism and his Lordship give of this ambiguous homony-
 mous word, *Person*, being considered, it is plain that they differ about
 the meaning of a Word, and that still, while their Doctrine is one and the
 same. The Racovian Catechism defines a Person to be an individual Intel-
 ligent Essence; but according to the Bp of Worcester, a Person is one and
 the same Nature under different Modes of Subsistence. *What is the
 The Bishop will not say that there are three individual*
Intelligent Essences in the Godhead: The Racovian

never did say, that the Unitarians were not Christians, but that they were not Christians as the Orthodox were. The Case is this—While they follow the Definition of the Nicænum, which was accommodated to the common Acceptance of the word, *Person*, their Doctrine was—But One Person is the One God: But when the Nicænum unanimously declar'd that they were not *Persons*, not a complete intelligent Being, but only Relations, Properties, or Modes of Subsistence; then the Unitarians made no scruple to own three Persons in one Godhead. As to the Particular before us then, all that I would beg of my Lord of *Worcester* in behalf of the Unitarians, is, that they may have leave to be as much Socinians as his Lordship, more they will not desire: and if his Lordship hath any Arguments to refute the Tenets of the Realists, consisting of three distinct Minds, Intelligent Beings, Essences, which the Socinians have not us'd before him; let him be pleas'd to communicate them, and the Unitarians will promise for the future to oppose the Trithem of the Realists only by his Lordship's Arguments, and not by any borrow'd from the Socinians: farther, the Unitarians will be content that his Lordship shall only declare himself against the Doctrine of the Realists, who are by reason of their equal Learning, Eminence and not contemptible Numbers, too considerable to be otherwise griev'd: but far from every Orthodox Father be that Injustice, common among Boys, who when the Person that gives the Offence is out of their reach, strike him that stands near.

It is not much out of place here to commend the good temper of the Unitarians, who for preserving brotherly Love and Peace among Christians will not litigate about Terms and Words, on which the Authority that imposes them, puts an honest Sense and Meaning: there are [it must not be deny'd] so small Inconveniences in losing the common Signification of words: but that's so well supplied by a new Definition of the words that are alter'd, that I would sooner envy our Cause the Power of declaring Articles of Faith, than the Liberty of making words signify, in spite of common Sense, what they please. The greatest Mischief is, when words that must be us'd in Theological Controversies, must not signify as they have commonly done, nor yet be determin'd anew in any other explicit Particulars: but this is the Fault of some Realists. One of the Unitarians in his Book call'd *The Agreement*, &c. pag. 41. has examin'd the Sense of the Bishop of *Serres* concerning the Incarnation and Divinity of our Lord Christ, and grants that the Sense of his Lordship may pass for Orthodox, but undeniably exacts that the Sentiments of the Unitarians are a degree or two more Orthodox. I shall not repeat

repeat, but refer the Reader to the place, chusing rather in pursuit of my chief purpose to insist wholly on this; that there is not so wide a Difference between his Lordship's Explanations and the Racovian Catechism as might be imagin'd, and that his Lordship is at least as much Racovian as the Unitarians. I do not aim to vindicate all that's in the Racovian Catechism, but only so much of it as the Unitarians are concern'd with. The Racovian Catechism teaches that Jesus Christ was a true Man by Nature, but had not truly a Divine Nature; that Jesus Christ was not so constituted of a Divine and Human Nature, as a Man is of a Body and Soul. The Bishop of *Sarum* teaches in the 2^d of his four Treatises, p. 96. That the Godhead by the Eternal Word, the 2^d in the blessed Three, dwelt in, and was so inwardly united to the human Nature of Jesus Christ, that by virtue of it God and Man were truly one Person, as our Soul and Body make one Man. It must be confess'd that here is Contradiction in Terms direct and plain as can be: but let the Exposition of the Terms which is given on either side be duly weigh'd, and it will evidently appear, that the Racovians and the Bishop agree very well as to the Substance of the Article, except in one small respect wherein his Lordship is at some small variance with himself. When the Racovians teach that our Lord Christ who was a true Man, had not a true Divine Nature, they do not mean that he was not constantly illuminated, conducted, and actuated by the Godhead; but only that the Godhead did not become commensurate to a finite Man, so as to produce a real Communication of Idioms, and thereby make the great things which are spoken of Christ in respect of the Illuminating, Conducting, Indwelling Godhead, to be equally applicable to his Humanity: this is plain from the Reasons they give why they deny Christ to have a Divine Nature. The first is this, two Substances endued with opposite Properties cannot combine into one Person, *i. e.* [according to their Sense of the word *Person*] into one individual Intelligent Essence. Nothing occurs throughout the Bishop's whole Discourse contrary to this Negative; but to establish it more sure, several Expressions of the Bishop's [as Mr. *Hill* of *Kilmington* has observ'd upon him] intimate that the Manhood of Christ is a Person distinct from the Eternal Word that dwelt in him. 2. The Racovians deny the Divine Nature of Christ, because [say they] two Natures, each whereof is apt to constitute a several Person, *i. e.* a several individual Intelligent Essence, cannot be huddled into one Person, or one individual Intelligent Essence. One would think that this Reason should not down with the Bishop, and indeed the Language does not; for p. 102. he says that from the Divine and Human Nature united, there did result the Person of the Messias: but then what does he

union by the Divine and Human Nature united? Why, no more than
The Human Nature always united, inseparable, and consubstantial by the Di-
vine. This is very agreeable to Scripture, yet, and the Racovian Cate-
 chism also. But to make this look more like an unintelligible Union, that
 the Rebels might not charge him with betraying the Cause to the Uni-
 terians, he calls it in lofty Phrase, an *assuming the Man into an inward*
and inseparable Obediency, p. 126. In short, the Bishop makes no more
 of the Divine Nature than this—Christ was God by virtue of the in-
 dwelling of the Eternal Word in him, p. 127. The Racovians scruple
 the Phrase, *Divine Nature*, but admit all that the Bishop makes of it.
 The Bishop places the Divine Nature in that thing, which the Racovians do
 not deny; and the Racovians deny the Divine Nature, for Reasons which
 the Bishop allows to be *Pinches*: so then the difference between them is
 purely Nominal, a meer Logomachy. But to do his Lordship justice,
 he is in the right for using the Terms, *Divine Nature*, and *God-man*,
 because they are Terms author'd by the Church, on which both his
 Lordship and the Church put an honest Stake: and the Racovians were
 too stiff in refusing them, especially considering that in their very Cate-
 chism they speak, in other Phrase, as honourably of Christ as his Lord-
 ship; for they say, that Christ is by no means to be reputed a meer Man,
 they give their Reasons for it, and therefore call him a Man truly Divine:
 and for my part, I think a Man truly Divine, must have a Nature truly
 Divine; and therefore the Racovians, whose Doctrine is taught by the
 Bishop, would have done better had they taught it in the Terms of our
 which the Bishop uses. No perhaps he is not fond of the Terms, which our
 may partly justify his declining to consider all or any Speculations con-
 cerning the Eternal Generation. Whereas the Unitarians fully to demon-
 strate their Orthodoxy, allow the Eternal Generation of the *Logos*, Son,
 or Wisdom. Let me not forget that I observ'd the Bishop did not so well
 agree in one small respect with the Unitarians, which respect was such,
 that therein he was at some small distance with himself: the thing is
 this, He has affirm'd that God and Man make one Person, so the Soul
 and Body make one Man: it was proper for him to take up with this Ex-
 pression, in conformity to the Athanasian Creed: but his Philosophical
 Reasonings look quite another way; for, p. 102. he has these Words,
 “ It has been thought that the Human Nature in Christ had no special
 “ Subsistence, tho' it was not easy to explain this Notion, since if Substi-
 “ tence belong'd to the Human Nature, it might seem that it *Existed*
 “ *Human Nature* was not perfect if it had not a proper Subsistence. An Hy-
 “ postatical Union was propos'd as a Term fit to explain this by, &c.
 “ the Human Nature in Christ was believ'd to subsist by the Subsistence
 “ of

" of the Word; but it was not easy to make this the more intelligible, by offering a Notion still as unintelligible as it self to explain it by. Now tho' the Bishop is a cautious Man, and will have a care of offending a Brother, as appears by those soft ways of expressing his dislike of an Opinion—*It has been thought—It is not easy—It might seem*—Yet here he sufficiently discovers to any considering Reader, that he believes the Human Nature of Christ had a proper Subsistence; and if it had a proper Subsistence, then [say I] by it self it constituted Christ a Person, and then God and Man did not make one Person, as the Soul and Body make a Man: For the Bishop explains Subsistence thus, " We may conceive the Subsistence of an intelligent Being, to be its acting intirely in it self, or upon Matter united to it, without any other Spirit's being constantly present to it, actuating it, as having it under any immediate vital and inseparable Influence. It may seem strange tho' that the Bishop should intimate, that the Human Nature of Christ had a proper Subsistence, a Subsistence of its own, and afterwards define the Subsistence of an intelligent Being, to be its acting intirely in it self, without any other Spirit's being constantly present to it, &c. It is a Mercy that Self-contradiction is not Mercy. I hope the Bishop is not of Rheasius's Mind, who thought that the Teachers of contrary Doctrines were all in the right. St. Austin could not persuade himself that any one could be so whimsical, but upon the Supposition he puts down the Name of *Rheasius* in his black Catalogue of Hereticks."

I design'd to have spoke at large with the Bp of *Sarum* concerning the Satisfaction of Christ, on which Article he can have no difference with the Unitarians, and has as little as may be with the Racovians; but the Author of *The Agreement*, &c. having been before me, I shall be the shorter. There is not a more artful controversial piece of Writing, than some few Pages of the second of the four Treatises. His Lordship's Learning and piercing Judgement are such, that he clearly sees through the whole Article, and no Man were better able to state it plainly, to disentangle it from the Philosophy of the Schools, to decide it accurately, and firmly establish the certain Truth; but then his Wisdom is such, that while he gives forth his Lectures, which may be very profitable to them that know how to use them, he retreats from the envy of the Calvinists in a set of Ecclesiastical Phrases, whose strict Grammatical Sense has been long laid aside; he distinguishes himself from the Racovians by labour'd Metaphorical Flourishes, thrown upon the Unitarians to hide his Agreement with them, and amuses the Writers of positive Divinity, [which Character he can tell any Party was not meant of them] to dissemble his aversion from their

their unreasonable and odious Scheme. I will convince the Reader of the Justness of my Observation. The Racovians dispute against their Doctrine, who determine that there is such a Mercy in God as must forgive, and such a Justice as must punish, and cannot be satisfied without it; that because God would have both his Mercy and his Justice take place, therefore he found out that way to forgive Sins, by sending his Son to suffer Death in that Nature which had offended. These Racovians acknowledg God to be wonderfully merciful and just, but they contend that he freely forgiveth, that he punisheth Sins when he pleaseth, when his Wisdom thinks fit. Now let's hear the Bishop; he sets his Face against the Writers of *Positive Divinity*, and censures these their Doctrines, "That God cannot freely forgive Sins; that punishing;

P. 135. "as well as remunerative Justice, are essential to him; that

"God being infinite, every Offence against him has an infinite
 "Guilt, and must be expiated either by Acts of infinite Value, or of
 "infinite Duration; and that a Person of an infinite Nature was only
 "capable of Acts of an infinite Value; that such a one was necessary for
 "the expiating Sin. And are not these the very Errors oppos'd by the
 Racovians? more fully and elegantly suited by his Lordship, that's true, for
 nothing loses under his hand; nor do the Racovians overthrow these
 Errors with that irresistible force of Argument as his Lordship. For,
 says he, "In all this Gradation there is one main Defect, the Scripture
 "sets none of these Speculations before us; nor is it easy to apprehend,
 "that a Right of punishing which is in the Legislator, and a
 "Right to reward, which passes from him to the Person that acquires it,
 "should be equally essential to God; in the one his Fidelity and Justice
 "are bound, because of the Right that accrues to another; but
 "the other of punishing, seems to be a Right that is vested in him-
 "self, which he may either use or not, as he pleases."

Agreeing thus in the main, one would wonder what Nicety should divide the Racovians and his Lordship: there must be but a Nicety between them; but 'tis not the first time a Nicety has made a great Breach between Friends. The Bishop, speaking of his Racovian Friends, pretends to take Dislike, because they believe, "That
 P. 141, 142. "Christ only died for our Good, and not in our Stead,

"what by his Death he might fully confirm his Gospel,
 "and give it a great Authority — They believe, That by his dying,
 "he intended to set us a most perfect Pattern of bearing the sharpest Sufferings with the perfectest Patience — and the most entire Charity — that by doing this he was to merit at God's hand that su-
 "preme

"prerogative Authority with which he is now vested for our Good; that so
 "he might obtain a Power to offer the World Pardon of Sin upon their
 "true Repentance. Finally, That he died in order to his Resurrection,
 "and for giving a sensible Proof of that main Article of his Religion.
 Now what does his Lordship believe more than this? Why he says the
 same things over again in a new Set of Phrases, and adds this
 Exposition; Christ suffered both *upon our Account*, and in *P. 143.*
our Stead. If the Bishop would abide by the strict and
 most proper Sense of these Words *In our Stead*, he would indeed differ
 in a considerable matter from the Racovians; but then he would also
 differ as much from himself; for he means no more by suffering *in our*
stead, than the Racovians mean by suffering *for our goods* as appears
 from what he says p. 135. "If every Sin, as being of infinite guilt,
 "must be expiated by an infinite Act, it will not be easy to make this
 "out; how the Acts of Christ, tho infinite in value, should stand in a
 "strict equality with all the Sins of so many men, every one of which
 "is of infinite guilt. If his Lordship is sincere in this, then he cannot
 pretend to believe that Christ suffer'd the infinite Punishment due to the
 infinite Guilt of all Men, and by doing so, made a full, proper, and
 adequate Satisfaction for the Sins of the World; which is the strict and
 proper Sense of suffering in our Stead. All that his Lordship does, or
 can consistently to himself, make of this Phrase—*In our Stead*, is,
 That Christ did so suffer for our Good, that if he had not suffer'd as he
 did, we must have been the miserable Sufferers ourselves. But there
 is another Phrase wherein his Lordship labours to distinguish himself
 from his Friends, and that is, *Expiatory Sacrifices*. But he may please
 to consider, That the Racovians are not utterlyaverse from this Phrase;
 for in their Catechism, to that Question, What think you of those Sacri-
 fices? [i. e. of the Old Covenant.] they answer, p. 139. "By them
 "the Sins of the People were expiated or aton'd; that is, by the inter-
 "vening of those Sacrifices, Remission of Sins, graciously decreed by
 "God, was brought to effect. Otherwhere also they thankfully ac-
 knowledge, That the Death of Christ expiates our Sins, through the gra-
 cious Condescension of his Father, who is pleas'd to accept that Sacri-
 fice, not as a Payment to his Justice, but as an Application to his Mercy.
 And just this, but more elegantly [as always] his Lordship explains
 what he means by an Expiatory Sacrifice, p. 151. "We are to consider,
 "that in Sacrifices it is the Appointment, and the Acceptation; which
 "makes the Satisfaction; for God's accepting a Sacrifice, is an Abate-
 "ment of the Rigour of Justice, and a declaring that he will pardon Sins
 "in

in such a Method and upon such a Consideration. He had spoke to the same purpose, p. 156. But I am weary of transcribing. By what I have said it is plain, That on the Article of Christ's Death, and Satisfaction for the Sins of Mankind, there is no real Difference between the Bishop and the *Acatholic* Catechism: and when his Lordship explains his late proper Phrases, there's an end of all verbal Difference between them.

As before of the Bishop of Worcester, so now of the Bishop of Sarum, I have one thing to beg in behalf of the Unitarians: But because I would not offer my Petition rudely, I have a very pertinent Story to introduce it. In the beginning of the last Reign, *William Penn*, in behalf of himself and Friends, presented an Address, which to the best of my remembrance was thus worded,

"*James*, We are sorry for the Death of thy Brother *Charles*, but we rejoice that we are fall'n under thy Government. Thou art a Dissenter from the Church of *England*, so are we: we hope thou wilt allow us that Liberty which thou tak'st thy self. So farewell.

By this excellent Pattern I draw up my Petition.

"*My Lord of Sarum*, The Unitarians are sorry that they have been misunderstood by the Church of *England*, but they rejoice to find that your Lordship teaches the same Doctrine which they have done: If your Lordship thinks it no Heresy in your self, they hope it will be none in them. So farewell.

Having thus shewn by what Methods the Unitarians defend their Doctrines of evil Tendency and mischievous Consequence, I think it fit to requite my self of a Promise to *Mr. Edwards*. He takes notice of these Words in the *Agreement*, *Sec.* p. 7. "He may, for our parts, be assured that whoever teaches or believes that Doctrine, viz. That there is no Merit in what Christ did or suffered, and that he made not Satisfaction for our Sins. And he pretends that the contrary way was taught by an Unitarian (other day in these Words, "The Oblation which Christ made of himself, was not made to the Justice of God, or by way of Reparation, but, as all other Sacrifices, by way of humble Suit, Now I take this Passage to be so far from a Contradiction, that it may be look'd upon as a just and reasonable Explication of the former. The Bishop of *Sarum*, either more honest or more discerning than *Mr. Edwards*, represents the *Securians* owning that Christ by his Death merited at God's hands, merited a supreme Authority, and obtain'd a Power to offer the World Pardon of Sin upon their true Repentance, p. 142. He believes also, with the *Unitarians*, that the Oblation was made,

not to the Justice, but to the Mercy of God; for he says, page 133.
 "The Right of punishing, God may use, or not use, as he pleases;
 "and that the Acts of Christ, tho infinite in value, cannot stand in a
 "strict Equality with the Sins of Mankind. And whereas Mr. Ed-
 "wards accuses the Unitarians for scoffing and ridiculing the Merits and
 "Satisfaction of Christ, they are ready to tell him, 1. That they are the
 "least given to scoffing of any Writers of Controversy. 2. It cannot be
 "pretended that they have scoff'd the Merits and Satisfaction of Christ, as
 "the Church and the Bishop of Sarum understand those Words, whatever
 "they may have done to the Calvinistical Hypothesis, which Mr. Edwards
 "most embraces, if on this Subject he disputes against them. 3. Whether
 "the Calvinistical Hypothesis be fit to be scoff'd at, I will not argue; but
 "I am sure it deserves to be abhor'd. That there was no such Justice
 "in God, as necessarily oblig'd him to exact a Satisfaction, is a Per-
 "suasion not only built upon found Reason, but also credited with
 "the Authority of the most eminent Theologues, ancient and modern:
 "Mosses, in his Answer to *Ravenfberger*, has quoted above a dozen of
 "them, and *Calvin* and *Zanchy* are two of the number. But Mr. Edwards
 "I will not say refutes, but corrupts the very Dregs, the four Hypostasis,
 "the heavy Subsidence, the thick Sediment of Calvinism.

I thought I had concluded the Topick on which I have dwelt (I fear)
 too long already; but I beg the Reader's Patience yet farther, that I may
 call to mind a Gentleman who has engag'd in this Controversy, and
 might take it ill if he should be neglected, as one not worthy of our
 Notice.

He is a zealous Accuser, and a strong Justifier of the Doctrine of the
 Unitarians; but since his Courtesy is more beneficial than his Anger in-
 jurious, tho perhaps he never intended it so, I will do what I can to
 reconcile him to himself. He is an irreconcilable Enemy to the Unitar-
 ians, or Socinians (as he calls them) of *New Atlantis* and *Utopia*,
 but accords perfectly well with the European Unitarians, both Foreign-
 ers and English. He saith p. 58. "There is a Distinction made in the
 "Godhead, under these three Names, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,
 "which the Church hath express'd all together by the Word *Trinity*,
 "and singly by the Word *Person*. — I conclude that there is some-
 "thing more than a mere Nominal Distinction. — I conclude that
 "they are not three distinct different Spirits. From these two Conclu-
 "sions let's hear what he infers, p. 59. "I infer there is in the God-
 "head something more than a mere nominal Distinction, and some-
 "thing less than that of three different Spirits. Some Men have such
 "soring.

rowing wild Heads, that they'll infer any thing from any thing; because the Moon shines with Light borrow'd from the Sun, therefore Kings hold their Crowns of the Pope: But our Author keeps close to the Matter, and infers from his two Conclusions, nothing but what he had concluded before. Well! if he is right in his Conclusions, he is safe in his Inference. But how came he by his Conclusions? Why, from some Passages of Scripture he found that there was a Distinction in the Godhead. Well! be it so. One might ask now, what is the Distinction? Is it a Distinction of Properties, Relations, Modes, or what? But for that we must hold him excus'd; for (says he) "I have not the least knowledg how strict the Union is, or how great the Distinction. He was well set on work then, to write against the English Unitarians, who oppose no Trin-Unity, but a Trinity of Three distinct Essences, in Numerical Unity.

But the Ignorance of this pert Academician is a small Fault in respect of that censorious and singular Boldness wherewith he takes upon him to censure his Superiors in the Church; his Superiors for Learning and Dignity both, who several of them have attempted to explain, and have made it intelligible [at least they themselves think so] how the Three are distinguish'd, and how united. *Mr. Peter Brown* fears not to throw this Censure on their Undertakings; p. 59. "Any Man who strives to conceive it himself, or takes pains to explain it to others, is guilty of such a Folly, that I can't think of any Action in nature extravagant enough to match it. This is very agreeable to his Sense, p. 173. where he intimates that neither Dominion nor Religion are founded in Reason. So then his Loyalty and Orthodoxy are both of a piece. Our Church of *England*, in the late Reigns, had much ado to be loyal enough for the Men of *Dublin*; I am afraid they will have much ado to be Orthodox enough for them now.

Having now spoke what I had to say concerning the Causes which have rais'd the Disputes at present agitated among us, I am next to consider what has inflam'd them to that dangerous Excess which in time may disturb the publick Peace.

Certainly it cannot be pure Love of God, or a sincere Desire to advance the Happiness of Mankind, which makes Religious Disputants manage their Controversies with that angry impatient Heat: I know 'tis not uncommon for Men to pretend the Honour of God, and the Interest of Holy Religion, when they whet their Tongues like Rasors, and dip their Pens in Gall; when they lay Plots to oppress and kill, and are bent on Ruin and Destruction: nay, 'tis possible for them, while they are thus

thus mischievously imploy'd, to think they are doing God Service, but they must have prodigiously debauch'd their Reason, before they can entertain such Thoughts; for it is not easy to believe that God delights in Uncharitableness, Envy, Hatred and Persecution.

It is not easy to believe that Persecution is not contrary to the obliging good-natur'd Precepts of the Gospel.

It is not easy to believe that Force is the way to convince Men of their Errors.

It is not easy to believe that Force is a proper way to move Men to consider.

It is not easy to believe that speculative Opinions which Men cannot help, should be destructive of their Eternal Happiness.

It is not easy to believe that the Magistrate's Sentiments are rational and true, merely because they are the Sentiments of those who are in Authority.

It is not easy to believe that the Magistrate has a right to enforce his own Opinions, when himself is confessedly liable to Mistakes.

It is not easy to believe that God would be worshipp'd in every Nation only by that way which the Magistrate shall chuse.

It is not easy to believe that 'tis the Duty of Men to worship God contrary to their Consciences.

Is it not easy to believe that Persecution, which naturally tends to set all Mankind together by the ears, to destroy Trade and Commerce, and to hinder the Improvements of Knowledge, can be doing God good Service.

It is not easy to believe that Magistrates were appointed to ruin those for whose good, we are told in Scripture, they were ordain'd.

It is not easy to imagine, that Authors who have publickly profess'd that in Matters of Faith every Man must judg for himself, and that every Man using his own Judgment, without Pride or affectation of Singularity, is doing the best thing that he can do; that simple Error is not Heresy, &c. it is not easy, I say, to imagine that such Authors can esteem Persecution a part of that reasonable Service which they owe to the Great God.

If Men of reviling persecuting Tempers could be perswaded deliberately and seriously to examine their own Minds, and put themselves the Question, What is it which prompts them to give bad Language, to calumniate, to form Designs against the Fame, Estate, Liberty, and Life of their Brother, to pursue him beyond this Life, [not as *Brutus* did *Arms*, which was the Wit of the Historian] but with real Enmity to pursue him beyond this Life, to hang him and burn him in order to damn

him; no doubt they might perceive that they were not mov'd by a true Love of God, or a desire to advance the Happiness of Mankind, but by an undue Love of themselves, and a desire to advance some not very honourable Interest, which might be much impeded by an indulg'd Liberty of Prophesying: 'tis something of this kind which has mingled so many bitter Reproaches, false Stories, and malicious Insinuations with our controversial religious Pleadings. That I may avoid the envy of descending to Particulars, I leave my Observation, as it is propounded only in general, being satisfied that free impartial Considerers will soon perceive its Truth; and as to those Persons who are less us'd to look into the Reason of things, I will for their sakes cover it with a great Authority: Bp of Sarum's 4 Tracts, p. 185. " If it be said that Error does disturb
 " the Peace and Order of the Church beyond what is to be apprehend-
 " ed from Sin; Error runs Men into Parties, and out of those Factions
 " do arise, which break not only the Peace of the Church, but the whole
 " Order of the World, and the quiet of Civil Society; whereas Sin does
 " only harm to those who are guilty of it, or to a few who may be cor-
 " rupted by their ill example: To this it is to be answer'd, That Sin
 " does naturally much more Mischief to Mankind than Error. He that
 " errs, if he is not immoral with it, is quiet and peaceable in his Error;
 " therefore still the greatest Mischief is from Sin, which corrupts Mens
 " Natures thro its own Influence. And the Mischief that Error does pro-
 " cure, arises chiefly from the Pretensions to Infallibility, or something
 " that is near a-kin to it: for if Men were suffer'd to go on in their Er-
 " rors, with the same undisturb'd quiet that they have for most of their
 " Sins, they would probably be much quieter in them; since Sin of its Na-
 " ture is a much fiercer thing than a point of Speculation can be suppos'd
 " to be: but if Men apprehend Inquisitions or other Miseries, upon the
 " account of their Opinions, then they stand together and combine for
 " their own defence; so that it is not from the Errors themselves, but
 " from the Methods of treating them, that all those Convulsions have
 " arisen, which have so violently shaken Churches and Kingdoms.

I quote no other Author, nor no more from this to the Purpose be-
 fore me, purely to avoid being tedious; but there is that plenty of con-
 curring Testimonies obvious to be collected from the printed Discourses
 of the most eminent of our Ecclesiasticks, that hardly a considerable Man
 of any order can call for the Sword of the Magistrate to punish Diffe-
 rences of Opinion in Matters of Faith, but he must do it in defiance
 of his own Conscience, as well as the Laws of the Land. I lay it down
 then, not only for a very certain, evident, but also for a generally consen-
 sed

Self'd Truth, that it is always a Vice, more or less artificially conceal'd, which prompts religious Disputants to fight the Lord's Battels with angry Noise, and fiery Words, and flaming Censures, that Thunder and Lightning of theirs, which does more Mischief than all the Artillery of Nature from the stormy Sky, or the sulphureous Caverns of the Earth.

And now there's no avoiding the Inquiry, Whether the Unitarians or their Adversaries, or both, have manag'd their Disputes with any of these unjust and unbecoming Methods. It is urg'd hard upon the Unitarians that they have ridicul'd the venerable Articles of the Christian Religion, and spoke disrespectfully and contemptuously of the most eminent learned and pious Fathers of the Church: for proof of the first Charge, the Story of *Dulcinea*, and one or two Passages more; of the second, the two Tracts, call'd, *Considerations of the Explications*, &c. are much insisted on. But methinks what the Unitarians say for themselves in their own Defence, is weighty: as much of it as has been communicated to me, I will set down, and add what more is obvious, and may be justly added; but for the everer Thred of Discourse, I offer both the one and the other as from my self.

I have scarce met with that Person who has read the *Considerations*, but confesses, those two Tracts may pass for Models of elegant, proper, and decent Writing, in the controversial way; and I was amazed that two Reverend Bishops should think themselves affronted or disrespected there; for my part I know not how a greater Deference could have been paid them, unless they had been honour'd as inspir'd and infallible Interpreters, and worshipp'd with Mr. *Edwards's* gross Flattery, which hal-lows their Names, and makes them signify *profound Learning, and solid Religion*. The severe Virtue of one of the old Romans, would have resented this as a Libel: But however Mr. *Edwards* vouches his elevated Compliment with a solemn Asseveration, "Without the least shew of Adulation it may be most truly said, that your Name is now not so much the Name of a Person or Family, as it is the Name of profound Learning and solid Religion. He that makes no conscience of such Strains and such Vouching, tho to a Bishop very Learned and Orthodox, would have bated nothing had his Patron's Merit been no greater than his own. But I digress — The briskness and saltness in those two Tracts, the *Considerations*, has nothing that is personal, nothing that reflected on the Persons of their Lordships, or of any other Antagonists: it is no more than is allow'd to all Writers, that their Books may not nauseate an ingenuous Reader, or weary and tire the more Delicate by a continued Chain and Course of severe and close Reasoning, like a high

Tragedy, without any Interludes of Musick and Dancing. And perhaps if their Lordships had leisure to look into their former controversial Writings, when they were engag'd with other Adversaries, they might find that themselves had us'd as much Liberty as here they condemn. A long deduced Narration of Argument upon Argument, naked Argument, without pleasing turns of Wit, or well-suted Ornaments of proper and manly Rhetorick, is a very dry Business, of which their Lordships have been so sensible, that when I was a young Fellow, I us'd to read their Writings for my Pleasure as well as my Profit; and I will undertake to prove that in the controversial Discourses which they have publish'd in Print, whether against Papists or other Dissenters from the Church of *England*, they have us'd the Persons of their Adversaries more disrespectfully and contemptuously than it can be pretended the *Considerer* has us'd them; so that were their Charge against the *Considerer* just, they ought to forgive him for their own sakes. It is a good Spanish Proverb, If a Man's own House be made of Glass, he should have a care of breaking his Neighbour's Windows.

But that which is aggravated most invidiously against the *Considerer*, is, the manner of his Reply to the late Archbishop; to expose which the Bp of *Worcester* repeats what he pleases, without its Dependance and Connexion, and then pronounces, *Prof. p. 54.* "The plain meaning of "all this is, that the late Archbishop was a *meer* self-interested Man. But if this be not the plain meaning, no, nor the meaning plain or obscure; then the *Considerer* is falsely accus'd. I will lay the matter before the Reader. The *Considerer* begins his Answer to his Grace the late ArchBp, with an Apology for his undertaking to answer so many Men of the first Order in the Church, eminent for real Worth and excellent Learning: He expresses a particular Deference to his Grace, as he ought, above all the rest. He then declares the Motives which perswaded him to answer; this being done, that his Cause might not lose by the Meanness and Obscurity of his Person, he ingeniously notes, that in the Commonwealth of Learning, there's no regard had to Titles of Honour; wherefore if he has prov'd his Point, it avails his Opposers nothing that they are great Pensioners of the World, bias'd by Rewards, and Aws. It will indeed hence follow, that the *Considerer* did mean that in his Judgment, the Honours and Profits enjoy'd by the ArchBp, might have some influence on his mind to hinder him from discerning plainly the state of the Question, or freely speaking his Mind: but this can never be made to signify that the ArchBp was a *meer* self-interested Man, but by such a Figure as makes the Name of a Learned and Religious Person truly signify profound Learning

Learning and solid Religion. 'Tis not the most uncommon thing in the World, for good Men, in great Places, to be influenc'd sometimes and in some things by self-interest; but a meer self-interested Man is one who is wholly govern'd by self-interest, whose Opinions alter as his Interest does, whose Stile accommodates it self to the Changes of Times, and the Steps of his own Advancement. But tho I am satisfied that the *Considerer's* Words do not reflect on the ABp. so injuriously as the Bishop of *W.* would perswade, yet I think it had been better that they had been unsaid, for they are off from the Argument, unbecoming, and best excus'd by observing, that none of all his Antagonists but has more to answer for upon this account than he.

As for that Charge of ridiculing the Articles of the Christian Religion, the Unitarians stand upon it, that they are perfectly innocent; only they acknowledg that they have wrote satyrically against the Heathenish Error of the Realists: but they hope they may be forgiven their Endeavours to put Tritheism to open Shame, especially because they never wish'd to see it hang'd or burn'd.

I have now noted what may be justly pleaded on behalf of the Unitarians, to acquit them from the Guilt of an undue management of the Controversy: but there are two things wherein I cannot excuse them; the first is a piece of Rashness and Indiscretion; the second, a Trespass against a distinguishing Precept of the Christian Religion. The Story of *Dulcinea* is pointed not against the Orthodox Doctrine, but the Scholastick Unscriptural Terms of the Nominalists. Now it was a piece of Rashness and Indiscretion to ridicule those Terms (how obnoxious soever) unto which, for Peace sake, they now confess their Consciences could submit. Sure they could not hope that the old Scholastick Terms should be laid aside at their Instance. *George Duke of Saxony* thought not amiss of the Reformation which *Luther* drove at; but that it should be made at the Instance of a pitiful Monk, seem'd to him insupportable. The Trespass against a distinguishing Precept of the Christian Religion, of which I think the Unitarians are in some measure guilty, is, That when they have been odiously misrepresented, foully calumniated, maliciously expos'd, haughtily insulted, rated, revil'd, and censur'd by this and other Adversary, better skill'd at Libelling than Logick, they have not taken it with all the compos'd Firmness of Mind, with all the steady Patience which the Commands of the Holy Gospel requir'd, and the Example of their blessed Master made practicable; but when they have been barbarously us'd, have answer'd angrily again. It's true, the worst Returns that they have made, compar'd with what they have suffer'd, may

may seem perfect Courtship ; but if they had never been mov'd from an even Christian Temper when all manner of evil was spoke against them without just Cause, their Labours would have gain'd a still higher Esteem, and perhaps have been handed down to late Posterity, as the most absolute Patterns of a dexterous and able, pertinent, close, and just Management of Controversy.

I should now examine how the Controversy has been manag'd by those Authors who have oppos'd the Unitarians, whether upon the Principles of Tritheism, or upon a misunderstanding of one another about certain Terms of Art which admit divers Construções : But I am really afraid of examining this, well knowing that I should meet abundance of Unchristian Matter, not capable of any favourable Representation. Should I but shew how they have treated one another, the impartial Reader would certainly say, that the Unitarians ought to sit down content under the Injuries which have fall'n to their share : and therefore I hope these Authors will give me leave to pass them over [all but one, who has distinguish'd himself by peculiar Antichristian Excesses] with this general, not harsh Censure. In some of their Writings there appears much Learning ; so much Learning, that it runs into Confusion ; such Confusion, that tho you may perceive whom they love, and whom they hate, yet you cannot easily divine what Opinions they are for or against : in others there are to be met better digested Learning, and a strong Vivacity of Wit. This Man despairs of solving the Difficulties he meddles with, but honestly hopes, that one time or other a lucky Interpreter will rise, that presumes he has started a Notion which *seems to give some light to help to form some general Idea* of Matters in question ; but among them all, there's little or no Christian Moderation and Temper. Yet if these great Persons had confin'd themselves to close Reasoning, and left the zealous angry part to Mr. *Edwards*, their Cause would not have suffer'd for want of calling Names. That worthy Author's Book, entitl'd *A brief Vindication of the fundamental Articles of the Christian Faith*, is such an entire piece of Railing, that no *Rabsheka* before Christ, nor *Lucian* since, ever equall'd it. 'Tis wrote too all in the Strain of *Bombo-machides-Clunistoridy-Sarchides*, Great *Neptune's* Grandchild : I vanquish'd the stupendous Giant *COL*, sprung from the proflick putrefying Gore of the odious *Leviathan* ; we fought on *Altercande's* Plains, where *Lana Caprina* has so often committed Fools and Philosophers together. I push'd hard at first ; in vain the mighty Monster roar'd, in vain disgorg'd his poisonous Replies : for now collecting all my Powers into one impetuous Volume, I pour'd in upon him 500 bald Reproaches,

Conun-

Conundrums, and Blunders innumerable; and to perfect the glorious Work, I murder'd his Fame, but that, with some few trifling Stories, two malicious Witticisms, and one lewd obscene Allusion. I ruin'd the whole *Posse* of the Unitarians, struck their chosen Champion dead, that Champion that was cull'd out of the whole Host, and was himself an Host, or else he had not been a Match for me; yet him I confounded only with some Scores of Perversions, and a few bolder Falsifications of Authors. I chain'd the Rector of *Steeple* to the Carcase of old *Malmshury*; like another *Mezentius*, I clap'd them together, *Component manibúsque manus, atque oribus ora*; And thus I made an One-Article Christian stink alive.

The wonderful Book, full of these Strains, borrows all the Credit which it can from an University-Licence. This calls to my Memory an Observation formerly sent me by a Friend. The Spanish Clergy have the Reputation of learned and judicious Divines all over *Europe*; not that they really excel those of other Countries, but because the Pride and Gravity of the Nation takes a particular Method which procures them this Fame: they will not suffer every spleenetick Trifler to scandalize his whole Order, by publishing his passionate Ignorance or Weakness to the World from the Press; they absolutely refuse to license any but very good Books. By this Policy of theirs, a Spanish Divine is become but another Phrase for a very learned and judicious Divine. This is a dextrous way of raising a vast Reputation to a Community from a small stock of Merit: our Universities might make their Advantage of it, but if they are for setting all hands to work, then Mr. *Edwards* ought not to be deny'd his humble Request. But this notwithstanding, I will say somewhat for his *Brief Vindication*; that is, If it had not been for one thing, it might have repaid the Kindnesses of the Licencers: for if all that part of it, which was meant for reasoning, had been downright railing, and the railing part reasoning, perhaps the reasoning would have been weak, because his Head is disorder'd, but the Book would have been a very civil Book. But indeed as it is, I defy all the Hereticks in Christendom, and all the Atheists in the World to write any thing so wicked and unchristian. I reserve the Consideration of Particulars, till he publishes such another Book; for I reckon, that tho he has in all manner of evil-speaking far out-done Hereticks and Atheists, yet 'tis not impossible, but that having succeeded so strangely in this unchristian Sally, he may adventure again, and out-do himself. But as for the Unitarians, if I were fit to advise them, they should never concern themselves any more with this Author. Mr. *Lock*, and Mr. *Bold* are in equal Prudence oblig'd to let him rail on.

There's

There's a Story in *Plutarch*, the Substance of which I remember, but the Book I have not by me ; some Strangers from *Chios*, debauch'd lewd Fellows, full of Wine and Madnes, vomited in the Court of the *Ephori*, the chief Magistrates of the City, nay, and did something worse in the very Chairs of State. Inquiry being made after the shameless Offenders, and Information giv'n in, every one expected to have seen them severely handled ; but the *Ephori* contented themselves with ordering their public Crier to proclaim, That the Gentlemen of *Chios* should have leave to be as filthy, impudent, and wicked, as their wretched base Natures would prompt them.

I shall have absolv'd my Design, when I have added what occurs to my Mind concerning the proper way to remedy the Mischiefs which have happen'd from the Controversy, and to prevent farther. One would think it were easy to remedy such Mischiefs, and to prevent the like for the future, because in the controverted Points themselves, there is so fair and full an Agreement between the Orthodox Nominalists, who are the Church, and the no less Orthodox Unitarians. Eager Disputants seldom convert one another ; but many times, after long Dispute, discover that they rashly fell out, and that there was no material Difference between them. Thus it is in the case before us ; but then a very odd thing happens upon it ; for the Parties are like to fall out again, because they fell out before for nothing. I am inform'd, that some angry Nominalists threaten to call the *Considerer* to account, for giving the Occasion of the Quarrel, and protest that they do not mean to be trick'd out of the Punishment of Heresy by a Turn of Wit. So the *New Justice* (if I remember right) in one of Old *Ben's* Plays, upon every Rap at his Gate he bid his Clerk run, and bring the Malefactors in, that he might draw their *Mutinus*. What ! no Malefactors yet ? *O Tempora ! O Mores !* But I thought it had been the Office of a Minister of the Gospel, to preach the Mercies of God in Christ, to teach, to exhort, to declare God's Judgements against Sin, not to execute them ; to win Men to God, not to send them to the Devil ; for God reserves the Execution of Vengeance, to himself, and therefore allows the Civil Magistrate no coercive Powers farther than to preserve the publick Peace, which is uncontestably prov'd in that admirable, strong, clear, and convincing Tract, entitled, *An Essay concerning the Power of the Magistrate, and the Rights of Mankind in Matters of Religion* ; for which the learned Author deserves a Statue in every Kingdom and Commonwealth upon the Face of God's Earth.

No Men can be in love with ill Usage, and therefore the Unitarians demonstrate, That they were always persuaded that they had these two ways to prove their Doctrine Orthodox, 1. The Suffrage of Reason; 2. The Testimony of Scripture; but now they have a third, the Authority of the Nominalist Unitarians, and they are resolv'd to make the most of it. They like the Doctrines they have always taught never the worse for their being reasonable; they are tenacious of them, because they are Scriptural; and not a little pleas'd to see, that the Nominalist Trinitarians have expounded the Articles of the Ch. of England to the very same purpose. Would the latter recant their Expositions, which are Unitarian all over, I would not excuse the former *neq; a ruin neq; paria*, nor from the Guilt, nor from the Punishment of Heresy: but as the case stands, they have but one thing to answer for, and that is, affronting some receiv'd Terms of Art; for which Offence, to say the truth, they have giv'n but little Satisfaction: for still they prefer Scripture Phrases before all other, still they look upon the receiv'd Terms of Art as ill chosen and improper, and consent, not to oppose them, only for Peace sake, and not out of any Reverence which they are willing to pay to the Inventions of Philosophick Fathers, or the critical Fancies of subtle Schoolmen. Indeed this Fault, let it be never so much aggravated, will not make out a very honorable Pretence for Ecclesiastical Execution, and yet 'tis the best that can be had, unless the *Persecutors* should chance to light upon the arbitrary Device, of taking upon them not only the Interpretation of the Articles of the Church, but also of the Writings of the Unitarians. By this means indeed the Unitarian Writings might chance to appear Heretical, that is, unless the *Persecuted* should fall into the Humour of appealing to all impartial and unprejudic'd Persons, whether the Writings of the Nominalist Unitarians be not as obnoxious as theirs, and altogether as much at the mercy of an Interpreter. And perhaps there be, that think the World has been troubled too much by them both, and that neither ought to be forgiven, unless they first forgive one another; and I am strangely deceiv'd, if I cannot name the Instances, which duly consider'd, recommend to them both so much Humanity.

The Nominalists are safe from the Unitarians, not only by the Unitarian Principle which disavows Persecution, but also because of their Paucity; nor can their Abilities make them formidable: for, as a great Man notes, their Adversaries are their Superiors both in Wit and Learning: and the Unitarians ought to be safe from the Nominalists, not only be-

cause the Doctrine of them both is one and the same, tho their Language sometimes varies, but also for those many cogent Reasons which are to be met with, in the *Essay* above cited, and in the Letters for Toleration; which I presume will have their influence on both Nominalists and Realists, as many of them as are men of Vertue, true Piety, and Christian Moderation; but as for such furious Inquisitors as Mr. *Edwards*, and Mr. *Peter Brown*, I reckon they are so very passionate, that they are utterly incapable of attending to sober Reasoning from plain Christian Principles: therefore I will tell them a Story, which perhaps they may have read in their younger days; and that it may not be thrown away upon them, I will be at the pains of application. *Pyrrhus*, Prince of *Epirus*, an ambitious Politick Captain, made use of one *Cynas*, a sensible witty Man, in the conduct of his weightiest Affairs. This Person one day accoll'd his warlike Master after this manner: The *Romans*, Sir, against whom we are arming, are a hardy valiant People; but if the Gods should prosper us, how shall we use our Victory? Why, said *Pyrrhus*, when we have beaten the *Romans*, we shall presently be Masters of all *Italy*. And how shall we govern our selves then Sir? Then Sir! why then *Sicily* holds out her Arms to receive us, a fruitful Island, a noble and an easy purchase. Very probable; and what! shall the possession of *Sicily* put an end to the War? O Friend! says *Pyrrhus*, we must not throw away the Opportunities which the Gods put into our hands. We are next bound for *Lybia*: and then *Carthage*, proud, populous, and wealthy, is ours: and by that glorious Conquest we shall become powerful enough to subdue all *Greece*. The subtle *Cynas* still plied him with the Question, What use we for next? At last *Pyrrhus* replied, Then we'll live at Ease, spend our days in Wine and Mirth, and nothing shall employ our Thoughts but the ways to vary and heighten our Pleasures. When *Cynas* had brought his unwary Master to this point, he turn'd short upon him, and ask'd, What hinders us now from living at Ease, without dispossessing others of their Rights, and hazarding our own Fortunes? Instead of running all these Risques, we may even now sit down and sing, *O be Joyful*.

Now to my Application. Mr. *Edwards* and Mr. *Brown*, furious Dealers in Polemic Squabble, ambitious both to spread their Empire wide over Conscience, were one day in Consult, how to remove the Obstacles that stood in their way. The methods they agreed on, were, to restrain the Press for fear they should lose by disputing, to censure what they do
not

not understand for fear there should be Heresy in't, to set up an Inquisition, to jail the suspected of Faith erroneous, and burn the avow'd Dissenter. Their first Process they determin'd to direct against a handful of Men, of late known by the Name of Unitarians, in contradistinction to some Ecclesiasticks professing to believe and worship three distinct Infinite Minds. Dr. *Christian Eubulus* was their Chancellor, whom they requir'd to prosecute the aforesaid poor Men with the utmost Rigour. This *Christian Eubulus* represented to them that the Unitarians held no private Doctrines, different from what were taught by our most Orthodox Prelates; that they were Men of some Learning, untainted Probity and good Sense; but if it was irrevocably decreed, that they were to be utterly rooted out, he humbly desir'd to know whom he was to fall upon next: Why! said Mr. *Edw.* and Mr. *Br.* when we have once dispatch'd these malepert Unitarians, we shall become formidable to all the Bawlers against Priestcraft, who now despise us, and need not be afraid to attack the *Quakers*; of whom the largest Division, the *Foxonians*, who are the ruling Party, are meer Deists; they are a numerous and politick People, the Scripture is to them a dead Letter, the Rule of their Faith is the Light within them, that is, meer natural Reason; and they have an odd way with them, instead of guarding their own Doctrines, they attack ours; so 'tis absolutely necessary to ruine this Sect: It may be done by Fines, Imprisonment, Death if need be, or merciful Banishment; What matter if the State lose by it? better be without them and their Effects, than plagu'd with their Heresy. *Christian Eubulus* seem'd to acquiesce, but desir'd to know of his Masters, whether they should have any more need of him: O Dear Friend, replied they, when God has blessed our Zeal so far for his Service, we must not give over so; there are two Sticks, so they call themselves, *Presbyterians* and *Independents*, crooked Sticks both, who cudgel one another when we let them alone, but not enough to the purpose; these Sticks must be burnt, both burnt, for they will not bend to decent Discipline; and by that time we have consum'd them to Ashes, all the little crawling Sectaries will fall down and worship as many infinite distinct Minds or Essences as we please, or one such infinite Mind in Language that signifies Three. *Christian Eubulus* was again at his Question, and when all the World conforms, What then? Then Man! replied the bold *Dunnoir*; why then we'll live like true Christians, none of our Communion shall be suffer'd to indulge himself in Prophaness and Immorality; we'll show Mercy, and do Works of Charity; we'll diligently

preach the holy Doctrines of the Gospel, and honestly practise them our selves; so that the Church shall become a Heaven upon Earth. When *Christian Eubulus* had brought his zealous Masters to this point, he put them the hard Question of all; Why can't we live like true Christians now? Why cannot we now discourage the Prophane's and Immorality of the Members of our Communion? What hinders us now from being fervent in Prayer, diligent in preaching the Gospel, and exemplary in our Lives and Conversations?

When one is got into Stories, especially by the Parlour Fire in a Winter Evening, there's no end of them; but if the Reader will forgive me, I will punish him but with one more, and it shall be as short as he could wish. *Bareley* in his *Icon Animarum*, tells us of a Father and his two Sons who excommunicated the whole World, and confin'd the Church within the narrow Pale of their own three Elect Persons; within a few days the hopeful Boys excommunicated the old Man, and not long after they excommunicated one another. Suppose now the Church of *England* should convert or confound the Unitarians, the Quakers, the Presbyterians, the Independents, and every little Philadelphia Society; nay, and Popish Recusants also, tho' that's a swinging Supposition: is all like to be Peace at home within her own Body? no such matter, the Quinquarticular Controversy will set 'em together by the ears among themselves; Mr. *Gaillard*, and the *Growth of Error* have already declar'd open War against all Churchmen of the Arminian Persuasion; for want of a Bone, the Theory of the Earth will make a bustle among them; and for ought I know the Royal Society may make some Discovery in Nature, that may be Heresy in Religion: but to mention no more, the Unitarian Controversy it self shall live among them as vigorous as ever; Dr. *Sherlock* will never forgive Dr. *South*; nor Dr. *South*, Dr. *Sherlock*; the Nominatists will never leave till they have run down the Trinitheists; the Trinitheists with their last Breath will revile the Nominatists for Sabellians and Socinians: so that in short, if the Church will have no War without her Pale, she must have one within; wherefore I would advise every one to make living like a good Christian his Business now, and never be troubled at the Disputes which are stirring, of which there's like to be no end, let the present Disputants that have the worst on't, by reason of their inferior Numbers, be run down, hang'd, or burnt, or not.

I conclude with one word of Advice to the Unitarians, *i. e.* that they would give over the Dispute; I know they are Men of Conscience, and have, within the Bounds of Moderation, been zealous for the Truth, but that will not suffer, tho they are silent; the Learned and Excellent Bishops of *Worcester* and *Salisbury*, Dr. *South* and others are able and forward enough to defend it against all the heathenish Opposition of the Tritheistick Tribe.

FINIS.
